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SCS #1028

Thomas F. Torrance.

MEDITATIONS

REPRESENTING

A GLIMPSE OF GLORY;

O R,

A Gospel discovery of Emmanuel's
land.

By Mr. ANDREW WELWOOD.

BOOKS Printed by JOHN BRYCE, and Sold at
his Shop opposite Gibson's-wynd, Salt-market,
in Wholesale or Retail.

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MEDITATIONS

REPRESENTING

A GLIMPSE OF GLORY;

OR,

A Gospel Discovery of *Emmanuel's Land.*

Whereunto is subjoined,

A spiritual Hymn, intituled, *The dying Saint's Song* : with some of the Author's last Letters.

BY

MR. ANDREW WELWOOD.

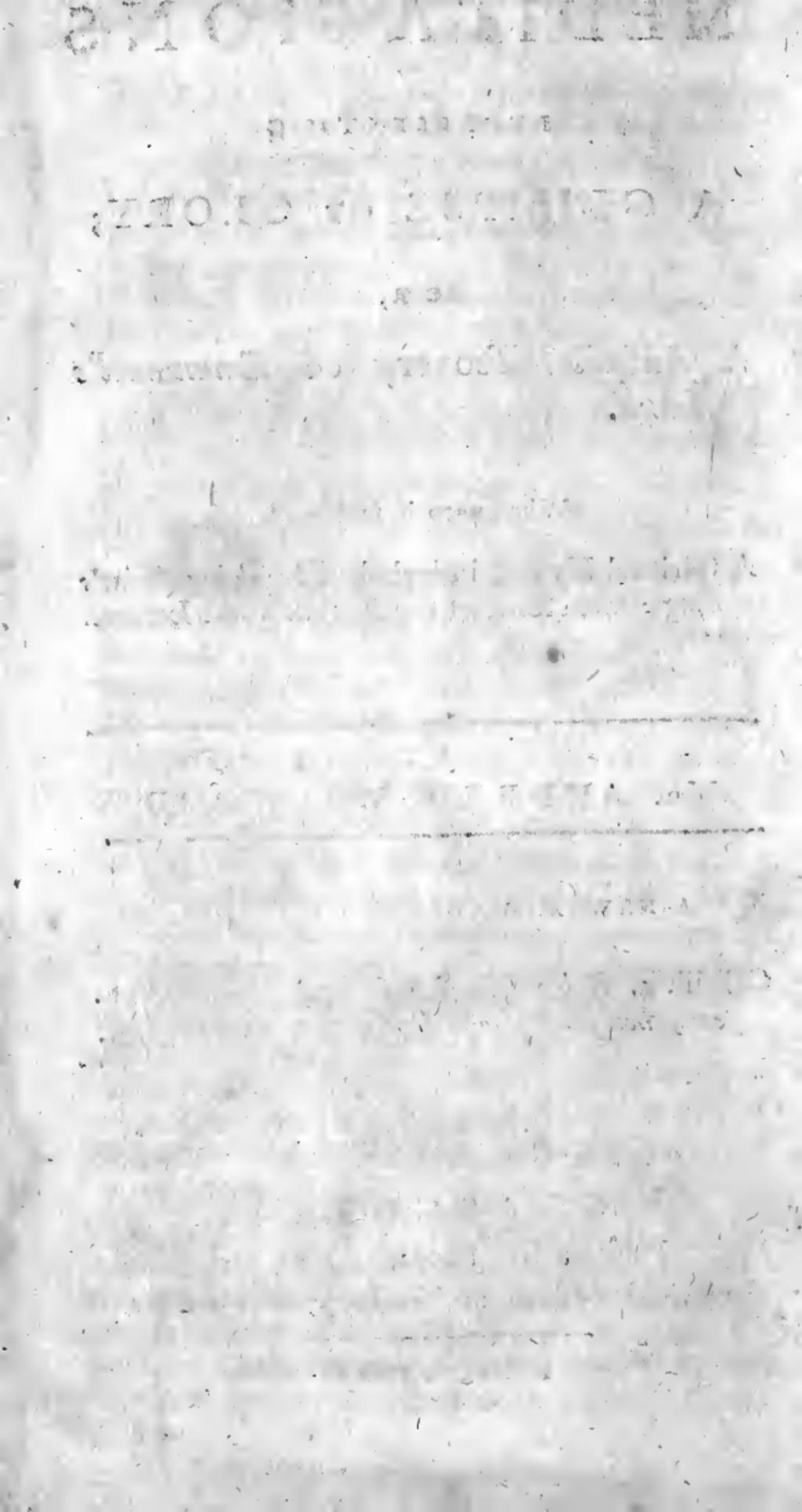
A NEW AND CORRECT EDITION,

Col. iii. 4. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

G L A S G O W :

Printed by JOHN BRYCE;
And Sold by him at his Shop, *Salt-market.*

M DCC LXXXI.





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P O E M.

Written by

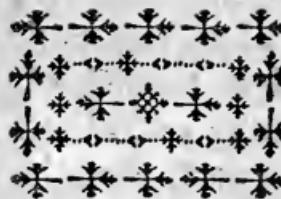
A Friend of the Author, upon the sight of this
rare piece, in Commendation of both.

Y
O U exc'llent souls, whose lofty minds aspire
To higher objects only, whose desire
Disdains o'ervalu'd dung, vile worldlings choice,
Is not allur'd with Siren's empty voice,
And scorns to aim below the Zenith high,
Whither refin'd perfections all do fly;
Here is an object highest thoughts transcending,
Yet unto mean conceptions condescending :
Here's heav'n, and glory, higher Eden come
T' unhappy earth, a sweet Elysium :
Here's glory brought to us, or happy we
To glory made, by nimble wings, to flee.
On seas of brinish tears, poor we are tos'd,
With boist'rous winds, and lofty waves are cross'd;
Can't see our dearest native soil, or lover :
But here's a curious prospect, to discover
That land afar off, those sweet hills, and vales,
Where blow these fragrant, soul refreshing gales,
Which rouse these fainting souls, whose feet do
Within the borders of Emmanuel's land ; (stand

Where shines th' Eternal, with celestial show'rs,
 Ne'er-ending blessings on the ransom'd pours.
 The soaring author hath flown up above,
 Drawn by the cords of his Redeemer's love ;
 Hath walk'd alongst the green and flow'ry banks
 Of life's sweet river, view'd the curious ranks
 Of glory's stately fruitful trees, hath tasted
 Their fruits most pleasant, and delicious ; feasted
 His eyes, on glory's land, most lovely, fair ;
 His taste, with Nectar, and Ambrosia rare ;
 His smelling, with heav'n's spring's embroidery ;
 His hearing, with harmonious raptures high ;
 His touch, upon the silken carpet's lap,
 Which glory's fields and alleys doth inwrap ;
 His mind, upon the elevated things,
 And deep contrivance of the King of kings :
 His love, on joys, which eye hath never seen,
 Which man's capacious heart did ne'er contain,
 He's sad, that mortals in foul mire should wallow,
 And greedily vile lumps of earth should swallow ;
 Most friendly bids you share some drops with him
 Of pleasure's streams, in which the saints do swim ;
 He (Isr'el's spy) ripe grapes from promis'd land
 Hath brought (t' inflame them) with a lib'ral hand,
 Thy pen mounts higher than the eagle's far,
 Thy sharpest eye, more than the eagle's dare,
 Thy draught Apelles tables far outvies,
 More curious thy picture is than his.
 Thy raptures future ages shall admire,
 And these shall light their tapers at thy fire.
 Thou'st trode a lofty path, ne'er trode before,
 And which shall be, it seems, by none trode more ;
 Thou hast outstript, and sham'd the ages gone,
 And by thy rarest writings grac'd thine own :
 The times to come may trace thy stately pace,
 But still thou'l get the honour of the place.

Who would see glory off the nearest shores,
 Draw near it with these curious mighty oars ;
 Cast out on glory's beauteous skirts your eye,
 And there, O saints, your ravish'd souls shall spy
 A paradise, whose lowest parts excel
 This vilest dunghill, in which mortals dwell :
 A paradise, each glimpse of which shall fill
 Your minds with wonder, and with joy your will :
 In short, a paradise, whose ev'ry part
 Shall so inflame your ever ravish'd heart,
 That longing you shall never rest, till ye
 Have heav'n in you, or you in glory be.

To



To the READER.

IN an age like ours, when infidelity and irreligion abound, books of piety and devotion are held in no estimation. The great bulk of mankind seems at present to be quite worldly minded, and to have little or no concern about the things which pertain to eternal life. It is now become entirely fashionable to be altogether influenced by a desire of gain, and of honour in the world ; so that, far from confessing themselves strangers and pilgrims, the generality imagine, or at least seem to imagine that they were created for no other purpose, but to acquire riches and possessions, and so to bring themselves into credit and reputation among men. The supreme ambition of their heart is, that they may be great, that they may attract the notice and admiration of all ; and be able in every thing to gratify their every desire. A man is famous and held in estimation, just in proportion to the sums which he can call his own, and the splendid figure he makes in life, and therefore MONEY is almost universally regarded as the chief and only good.

Few scruple to pronounce a man who is rich,
posseſſed

possessed of every noble and amiable qualification: but to be poor is, by many, reckoned the same thing, as to be base, ignoble and mean. No poor man, according to the now almost universally prevalent opinion, is possessed of any endowment of body or of mind. He is quite stript of every virtue, is thought capable of committing any crime, and held out as a disgrace to human nature. The poor are absolutely necessary for many purposes of the rich, but they must submit to be constantly insulted; they must at no time presume to think themselves of the same species with their haughty masters, and in general are treated much worse than their domestic brutes.

Money sanctifies every vice of the rich, and poverty degrades even the virtues of the poor. Nothing is thought a vice which is compatible with the acquisition of riches, and scarce any thing is deemed a virtue which tends not to increase the shining heap.

That charity, of which so much boast is now made, is hurt beyond expression at supposing a rich man wicked. It views with a placid eye his unremitting struggles to increase his gain. The noble exertions of his superior mind, whom no obstacles can discourage, nor any dangers affright, are a constellation of the most bright and exalted virtues. He is pronounced Patriotic and Great. He enlarges the commerce of his country, and procures labour to hundreds of poor. Ought then the faults of such a man to be noticed? Is not his total want of religion an undeniable proof of the fineness of his taste, and the enlargement of his sentiments? should he be exposed to the sneers of the world, for his observance of the precepts of the gospel; or be cramp't in his pursuits

TO THE READER.

pursuits of gain, by what is called, *The fear of the Lord*? This would of all things be the most unreasonable and absurd. But nevertheless, he is a good man; he entertains with a noble magnificence; he has the finest feelings, the most delicate and courteous manner, and is universally esteemed and beloved by all his acquaintances. This is the plain determination of what is commonly called *Charity*. But apply this charity to a sober religious mean man, who is a partaker of the nature of God, and makes his law the constant rule of his life, the greatest allowance it can make, is, that he is a poor misinformed, ignorant, enthusiastic, well-meaning harmless creature. In short, it is evident that the love of money is the source and spring of all the actions of the men of the world. This, therefore, being the case, every thing is valued just in proportion as it tends to the acquisition of wealth. Men are constantly studying, and eagerly inquiring, how they may attain this end: and did the treatise, contained in the following sheets, propose to open up a new source of gain, or to disclose any improvement in trade, the sale would be rapid; every one would shew the greatest impatience to procure a copy, which he would read and study with the closest attention.

Next to the acquisition of riches, men value pleasure and amusement, and sacrifice, not only much of their precious time, but also much of their money to gratify themselves in this respect. Whatever contributes to this great end is valued: whatever contributes to this is eagerly pursued. Those who abandon themselves to a shameful indolence, and can by no means be brought to engage in any useful employment, shake off their native

native sluggishness, and bestir themselves, when they expect to be gratified with some favourite amusement. Whatever tends to kill the time, and help away the tedious hour, fills with delight, and is eagerly sought after by them. And did this publication give reason to expect some book of diversion, or Novel, to dissipate the mind, and afford pleasantry and mirth; the joyful news would instantly be spread from one polite circle to another; it would furnish a topic of conversation, to the fashionable and the gay, who would not fail to express the greatest impatience, soon to participate of the pleasing entertainment.

But all those, who are constantly busied about the world, and indulge themselves in every favourite diversion, have neither time, nor inclination to attend to religion. To be surprised with a Bible in their hands, by any of their acquaintances, would make them as much ashamed, as to be convicted of theft. It is therefore by no means to be expected, that any of these will condescend so far as to open this book. Being stuffed with that low pitiful pride, which leads men to imagine themselves too great to be religious, they would be hurt beyond expression, was any one to suppose them capable of being so mean as to read a devotional book. And indeed, to be passed over unnoticed by them, is the best fate such a book as this can meet. The very title rouses their laughter and is the subject of their profane and impious jests.

But while this is the case with the men of the world, whose portion is on earth, it is to be hoped there are some, who, through the grace of God, have chosen that good part, which shall not be taken from them. To those who are seriously exercised unto godliness, such a book as this will

be precious. Being the poor in spirit, whose is the kingdom of heaven, they view every sublunary object and enjoyment in their proper colours, having their affections set only on things above. They know that they were naturally children of wrath even as others, and that their salvation is entirely owing to the sovereign, rich, free, and unmerited grace of God. It is at present their constant prayer, that they may know God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and whom to know is life eternal. They desire above all things to have the spirit dwelling in them, and to be sealed by him unto the day of complete and eternal redemption. Persons of this character and employment, esteem every thing noble, which, through the blessing of the Lord, may tend to build them up in their most holy faith. They are at present, under the banner of the cross, fighting the good fight of faith; and it must be pleasing, delightful, and cherishing to have a view of the glorious crown. Amidst all the tribulations, dangers, and temptations, to which they are exposed, a glimpse of glory or a gospel-discovery of Emmanuel's Land must be exceedingly agreeable.

This treatise was written by one, who experienced much of the love of God, and enjoyed almost uninterrupted communion with him. Through the whole of the book he writes, not like one encumbered with a body of sin and death, complaining of intervening clouds, and the withdrawing of his Father's face; but like one already entered into the joys of the Lord. It hath been already the blessed means of comforting the drooping hearts of many weary pilgrims; and tho' it be quite unintelligible to the man of the world

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and the formal hypocrite, yet none, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, will carefully peruse it, without feeling their heart to glow with heavenly love.

The happiness of the saints in light is described in lively strains. The adorable perfections of the great God are spoken of with becoming reverence; and the author never forgets to ascribe all unto him, who doth what seemeth good unto him in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He regardeth creatures as entirely insignificant, and the whole scope of his book is, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for they pleasure they are and were created.

He speaks with a most enraptured heart of Jesus Christ whom he esteemed the chief among ten thousands, and altogether lovely: and, tho' he sometimes uses phrases, which offend the pretended delicacy of many refiners in religion, yet, when the narrow compass of the language of men is considered, and the peculiar expressions of the spirit of God in Solomon's Song, are reflected upon, even these persons will see reason to suspend their censures.

He looks upon saints as the only excellent ones, whom he challenges not to forget their noble original, nor feed upon those unsatisfying husks, which are the proper food of grovelling swine. He treats the wicked, whom he all along styles **WORLDLINGS**, with a good deal of severity. The saints are at present exposed, to their cruelty, hatred, and contempt, and he shews, that they shall be eternally put under the feet of the ransomed of Christ. He speaks of the eternal tor-

TO THE READER.

ments of the ungodly, in a way not at all agreeable to the modern notions of hell, representing the righteous as giving glory to God for their everlasting destruction. This may to many appear severe and seem inconsistent with the feelings of perfectly happy beings; but those who read carefully their Bibles, and consider that they, who are conformed unto God in all things, must undoubtedly rejoice in every work of his hands, will not be disposed to find any fault.

There is a sentence, page 140, where he seems to make sincerity the condition of the new covenant, as perfection of obedience was the condition of the *covenant of works*; which may perhaps offend some, who dislike the very term *condition in a covenant of grace*. But whosoever considers how large and pathetic he is, in describing the free grace of God, and is ascribing all the glory of redemption and salvation to Christ, and only to Christ, must be persuaded, that he cannot mean, that the believer's sincerity, or any grace of his whatever, is the condition of the new covenant, in a legal sense; for in this sense Christ's righteousness alone is the condition of that covenant. Nor can we charitably judge, that this term *condition* is in any worse or stricter sense affirmed of sincerity, which presupposeth and includes faith, than it is of faith itself, in the 32d answer of our Larger Catechism. It is clear then, that the author takes condition in a large sense, for any thing required or accepted in the new covenant: and so it is true, that as Adam's works were to be perfect, in order to acceptance; so the believer's good works cannot be accepted without sincerity; and will, thro' Christ, be accepted.

cepted when sincere: which must certainly be all that the author there intends by condition.

He is also pretty positive in his opinion of the renovation of the earth and visible heavens, at the day of Judgement; which he describes in bright and beautiful emblems. The opinion is indeed controverted among the learned: but most of the orthodox are of the author's side. Hence, when he is speaking of things in that renewed state, after the day of judgement, none needs marvel, that he calls sun, moon and stars everlasting, and the earth an eternal monument, as in page 94; or, stumble at any such uncommon expressions; for he speaks as one beyond time in eternity.

Some perhaps will be apt to imagine that the method is not so clear and perspicuous as is generally found in books written upon doctrinal points. Such ought to consider, that the chief design of devotional writers is to affect the heart; and the reader will by no means find this book an indigested crude heap, but that there is a very good order observed through the whole.

As for the titles of the sections, the publishers were not certain whether they were added by the author himself, or by some other hand: nay, they did not want ground of suspicion, both from the difference of expression, and sometimes from their unsuitableness to the matter, that some less skilful person had added them. Yet, having no copies save one, (except the letters, and saint's song, whereof they found several copies,) to compare, it was thought safest to retain them, lest any thing should have been omitted which was in the manuscript. And the judicious reader is left to his choice either to read on the matter, without those titles, or otherwise; for it must be owned,

owned, that, considering the variety of heavenly purposes, some times comprised in one of these paragraphs, it is no easy matter for any man to devise an opposite title, to express the substance of the matter therein contained.

There is no doubt, but the reader, by this time, will be longing for some account of the author: and it were to be wished, that a true and genuine relation of the life of that pious youth could have been recovered, in order further to oblige the public, which, had it been practicable no pains would have been spared to transmit it: and without all doubt such a life would have been a rare and excellent draught, worthy of Christian imitation. He was the son of a godly father, minister of the gospel at Tondergirth in Annandale, concerning whom there is related this remarkable passage. When the Lord had taken away from him his beloved wife, the desire of his eyes, he spent the whole ensuing night in prayer and meditation in his garden. One of the elders of the parish who came next morning to visit him, condoling his want of rest by reason of the dispensation so lately befallen him, he replied thus, or to this effect:

‘ I declare I have not all this night had one thought
‘ concerning the death of my spouse; I have been
‘ so wholly taken up with the meditation of hea-
‘ venly things. I have been this night upon the
‘ banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there.’

This passage plainly shews what a heavenly soul this holy man hath been; and how plentifully this gracious youth, his son, hath been blessed with the same spirit, is abundantly evident from the ensuing treatise. His brother Mr John Wellwood was a person well known to many, and his memory is still favourly to all that knew him, for his

his holiness and diligence in the labours of the ministry, amidst many perils from bloody persecutors, and false brethren, and for his undaunted zeal and courage in the cause of Christ, tho' under a very weak and sickly constitution of body. What a life of faith he lived in these perilous times, is evident from several letters of his written to his godly acquaintances, and friends, yet extant in manuscript. And as he excelled in the grace of faith, so this holy youth, the author, seems to have peculiarly abounded in that of love, as will be abundantly manifest from the whole of this heavenly tractate. How zealous he was for the royal prerogatives of his lovely Redeemer, usurped by wicked rulers, and the public concerns of his house and glory; may be gathered from several passages in this treatise, tho' the nature of the subject did not permit him to enlarge much upon these things. It appears plainly, from his letters annexed to this treatise, that he designed to have served the Lord Christ in the work of the ministry, if it had pleased the Lord to continue his abode long here below: but the good Lord was pleased early to transport him from the wilderness of earth to the paradise of glory; and to accept the will, in that matter, for the deed, as he himself speaketh. He died at London, in the time of our late persecution, as would seem, of a consumption; under which affliction, how much he profited and grew in grace, appears also evidently from the same letters. He concluded his holy and happy, tho' short life, with the sweetest assurance of obtaining that celestial blessedness which he here describes, and so quietly slept in the Lord. And tho' the rest of the history of his life cannot here be committed to writing, (as was designed, if certain information

formation could have been obtained,) yet there is in the book itself a genuine transcript of it to be read; for no doubt he endeavoured to leave what he wrote, and such a lasting monument erected to the glory of his Redeemer, will also serve to transmit his memory embalmed to posterity, without needing any eulogium from another hand.

And now may the God of all grace, with whom is the residue of the spirit, accompany the perusal of this book, with his rich and effectual blessing: and may he grant unto all his people to enjoy communion and fellowship with him; and with Jesus Christ his Son; that they may have his spirit dwelling in them, and testifying to their spirits that they are the sons of God: that they may by every means of grace, be gradually prepared, for the full and complete possession of the heavenly happiness, which their forerunner hath prepared for them, in the mansions of his father's house.

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G L I M P S E o f G L O R Y;

OR,

A GOSPEL-DISCOVERY OF EMMANUEL's
LAND.

THE P R E L U D E.

ROUSE thee, O my soul, from this base and contagious earth: why should lower thoughts, and base aims possess thee thus? What hast thou here, that may draw thee aside from the centre of thy felicity but for one moment? If this world, in her rosy and youthful constitution, be very vanity and vexation of spirit; what must there be now in her sad and withered state? If, in her smiles, she be not worth the regarding; what folly is it, to court a frowning nothing?

2. Is it time, O my soul, to place one beam of thy affection upon such a silly, base dunghill, so as to give it an affectionate look? Trample it under thy feet: carry thyself after the manner of these, who expect the kingdom. God hath formed thee of such a spacious constitution, as nothing can satisfy thee below his infinite Self; and shouldst thou be confined, in thy outgoings, within the limits of this lower, smoky region? Mount up swiftly, far above the sun, moon and stars, beyond the borders of this narrow vault, where thou mayest sweetly bathe thyself, in these oceans of joys and

felicity, that know neither brim nor bottom : thou art not to waste away thy conceptions on things to-day in their vigour, and to-morrow they are not ; shadows, empty nothings, night-dreams and vanities, insufficient objects for the faculties of such a noble being to fix upon. Art thou not beginning to consider of a more enduring substance ? The kingdom that cannot be shaken, Emmanuel's glorious, stately and ever-flourishing land, the smiling, rosy place, where his servants do incessantly serve him, and see his face eternally, without a cloud ; where our all-lovely Wellbeloved doth corporally dwell, and shall for ever take up his eternal abode ; a fruitful, fragrant, beautiful, delightful foil, overflowing with the true and real Nectar and Ambrosia ; a garden of delights, a paradise of pleasures, planted at the beginning by the Almighty's own right hand, wherein he hath manifested, in an high and transcendent manner, the incomprehensible glory of his power, love and goodness, wonderfully, above what eye hath seen, ear hath heard, or the mind of man, within the tents of mortality, considered : what a wonderful frame is this ! O the alluring objects above ! The first thought whereof set all on a flame : O what desires ! O what longings ! When shall mortality be swallowed up of life, death of victory, time of eternity, miseries of blessedness, sorrows of joys, pains of pleasures, painted enjoyments and delights of his love and eternal sweetnes ?

3. All creatures are ever in action, especially these of the highest and most noble rank, which must necessarily have some object or other, to fix their outgoings upon : the most excellent and sublime are then to be chosen ; and what more excellent,

cellent, than what will fill all the powers and faculties of blessed men and angels throughout all eternity?

4. To take a view of the higher Canaan, is neither curiosity nor audacity, but a necessary duty, incumbent upon all, who are travelling thither: the advantages of such a noble study cannot be told, nay, nor conceived, but by the exercised therein.

5. According to the knowledge, so are the affections, both as to kind and degree: what we know not, that we cannot love; and what we behold lovely, we cannot but love. Seraphic spirits, no wonder you are oft-times ravished from yourselves! Ah silly worldlings, you cannot but have a drooping life of it; since you know nothing but earth: had you an half glimpse of the more enduring substance of the ever-flourishing, never fading glory, how should you be in an unexperienced frame of joy and admiration! How should you disdain all the lesser beauties on this side of time? but ah! you never saw the enduring glory; and what wonder you are as you are?

6. Mortality hath no greater joy, than the solid hope of glory, the sweetness, arising from the solid hope of so great things, fills the soul with wonderful ravishments, and perfumes the lowest of earthly enjoyments: surpassing joys to my soul! these temporal things my Lord bestows upon me, are as pledges of the fair inheritance. And, are not all visible things as so many emblems of the invisible? Worldlings, you are fools, to imagine we have a sad and melancholy life: none live but we; tho' we may be said to be, as to this life, 'of all men the most miserable;' it is only as to the bulk of externals; you know not our joys, nor

the manner of our enjoyments; neither can ye know them.

7. *Of necessity we must search after another life, than this evanishing vapour.*

May not the vanity and vexation of spirit, in the pursuit of every sublunary enjoyment, force us to the searching after another life? If we search not for the glory to come, then let us search after nothing at all. Sirs, what madness is it to notice this earth, unless in order to eternity? Do you not clearly see all your temporary enjoyments die in the birth? Are not the glittering shews of men on this stage of the world, like the appearance of aerial things in the clouds? Here are armies engaging one another, there are ships under sail, yonder are men riding in the equipage of kings, queens, &c. in other places are towns, castles, rivers, &c. All appear real to the spectators, but anon all evanish to nothing, and where are they? Fools! are they considering, that thus it is with all the glories of time! Verily, to all eternity, they shall be as if they had not been.

8. *The small study of glory proves us, in a great part, carnal.*

Is it not evident, we have our eyes too much upon shadows? and that we divide our looks betwixt heaven and earth; since our joys are more carnal than spiritual, and our longings and desires run so little heaven-ward? Ah! our love to the only Wellbeloved, is not unlike that which every nation carries to their God; else we would be often crying out, Is not my Wellbeloved gone unto another country? and shall not my heart and love for ever dwell there, and only there? Sit I down here, when he hath removed himself to another

other place? Can there be any thing desirable where he is not? O! all ye beauties of this lower world, what are you to me, if my Lord be absent? Let me pass through all possible difficulties, even through ten thousand oceans of burning fire and brimstone; provided I land at last, on that ten thousand times happy place, where he for ever dwells; that these arms may be blessed in embracing, these eyes in forever beholding, and all my faculties may be filled with his eternally ravishing sweetness. O, when shall I behold thy countenance! when shall I hear thy voice! when shall I stand among these happy, happy, happy ones, who stand in the immediate presence of thy all-glorious Majesty, and have the naked, immediate and clear vision of thine eternally ravishing Godhead! Ah, how is it I think of any thing but heaven! why are we not ever in an impatient longing to be in his everlasting embraces? Know we what it is to take him for our only Wellbeloved? Is not every sounding of his very name melodious harmony in our ears? doth not every hearing or reading of him affect us with a wonderful sweetness? Do not the thoughts of our being in his naked embraces ere long, fill us with an ecstasy of joy? Are we not often challenging years, months and days, why they succeed so leisurely to one another; and contending with sun, moon and stars, because they run their course so slowly; looking upon every hour as an age, in his absence; and death as of a sweet and lovely countenance, since it opens us a passage to the full enjoyment of him; and the marrow of all creature excellency, as a mass of deformity, if it should eclipse, for a moment, the sweet enjoyment of his all-sufficient Self?

9. *Students of glory overlook the difficulties and vexations of time.*

Sweet, sweet is the way to my blessed home! can the way be thought tedious, that leadeth to such boundless joy? O the goodly country I behold lying at the end of my race! hell in my way should be as a pleasant paradise: what though sadness assault me? yonder are oceans of joys at the end of my journey; though weariness? yonder are green pastures, with an eternal May; though death? yonder are floods, the rivers of life, of which I shall drink, and drink again, for evermore. Doth poverty and contempt intervene? Lo, the rich inheritance, the golden and pearly city, the splendid household-stuff? O the rich inhabitants! How do mine eyes affect mine heart! O blessed Christ, I have seen thee in thy beauty; and O how is my soul in an uninterrupted motion to be at thee! The affairs of time move not as such. O what allurements! who can see, and not run? O thy violent, sweet, attractive virtue! how strongly and quickly dost thou draw thy members up to heaven after thee! See I not thee, O Wellbeloved, standing with the massy crown of glory in thy hand crying, Run, and have it? And shall I not run, even run with patience and chearfulness unto the death? How chearfully did my Lord go up to Jerusalem, to purchase the crown for me! a crown to be purchased through a world of sorrows and difficulties! What am I doing? why stand I thus? all is purchased already, and the word is to me, Enter and possess.

10. *The study of glory is so alluring, that the more we study, the more we love to study it.*

Had we a discovery of the only excellent things, how difficult would it prove, to get our thoughts

plucked

plucked off them? Most lovely things, seen in their loveliness, captivate the affections most, and consequently determine the thoughts: do we not think most upon what we love most? Worldlings, I appeal to your consciences, if your thoughts run not out most upon earthly things: why? you know them only, and esteem them most: but, had you a view of the real world, the outgoings of your soul would run in a higher orb. Had we the impressions of glory on our spirits, lower objects should not easily draw down our thoughts, or turn them aside; yea, our higher powers should be so strongly affected as that the lower powers should be regulated even in sleep; our imaginations would be composing and dividing these ideas of the life to come, they received, according to their natures, from the higher faculties. How oft would we be, in our dreams, walking up and down the streets of the golden city, the beds of lilies and roses, in the higher paradise of glory, the banks of that *river of water of life*? Days thoughts have influence upon nights dreams; the disposition of the fancy follows that of the mind. Ah! ye sons of men, what wonder your fancy run out after so foolish a manner! the strength of your sublime powers is wasted on dunghill-concerns, your thoughts are full of earth, and all your lower powers are full of it also.

11. *Creatures are only to be esteemed more or less excellent, according to their knowledge, it being the primum mobile of all other endowments.*

Creatures are excellent according to their knowledge; let beasts imagine that the scenical garbs of riches, and titular honours, add any thing real to men, it is only knowledge that differenceth; without it a man is but a beast; and with it, in its elevated

elevated pitch, he is a glorified and immortal creature: 'This is life eternal, that they might know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' And, is not the knowledge more noble, according to the excellency of the objects, they being taken up congruously? O then! are they not seraphic creatures, whose minds are set upon the only excellent things? Had we a sight of that surpassing glory, how would our minds be elevated wonderfully above this base dung-hill? how should we look down upon the greatest things of earth, as inconsiderable trifles, far below our sublime spirits? how should we trample on crowns and sceptres, yea, many worlds, tho' existent, when elevated 'on our high places, 'clothed with the sun, and having the moon under our feet?' How should we laugh at silly earth-worms, crawling over one another with great trouble and vexation? Ah childish spirits? are you contending and wasting your inch of time on trifles and shining nothings? what is the gain, when all your projects are accomplished? Heirs of glory, no wonder you are termed by truth itself, 'the excellent ones of the earth;' none of excellent and generous spirits, but you. The opinion of blind worldlings concerning you is of no value; the excellency and baseness of mankind is not yet laid open; mortality, and its black retinue, obscure all; a little patience, and the Almighty shall unmask the whole race of mankind.

12. *A clear view of so great rewards encourages and excites to all duties.*

The clear sight of the great recompense of reward, makes the creature cheerful in duty. Am I so slow in my race, and the matchless inheritance at the stake? Cries not my Lord unto me, 'Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee

‘a crown of life?’ Is there such a necessary connexion betwixt a momentary fight, and an everlasting triumph? O the disproportion! who would not fight? who would not wrestle? O let me run to the death?

13. *The better we are versed in the study of heaven, the more we are fitted for it.*

Is not grace young glory; and the forethoughts of heaven, a preparation for heaven? even as black nature is a preparation for hell, the height and perfection of wickedness: there is a suitableness and congruity betwixt the creature and its condition. High spirits are not for base, low things; as creeping spirits are not for high. What things in heaven can delight a carnal soul? Earth, earth, and only earth, is its known object: give him earth, and he desires no more. There is congruity, and discongruity betwixt the capacity and object: beasts have no discernment of intellectual things; neither have carnal men (termed beasts in scripture) of the things of God. O sweet! how do the saints smell of glory, before they enter in? May they not say, ‘Whither I go, I know, and the way I know?’ were I ignorant of the world I remove for ever into, could I be thus in so joyful a frame? my soul is going to the place where my heart is already: ‘I know in whom I have believed,’ and what is his reward. ‘O joy unspeakable, and full of glory!’

14. *Noble apprehensions of glory, make us in part possessors of heaven and glory.*

Serious meditating on heaven, renders us, in some manner, possessors thereof: ‘Our conversation is in heaven,’ saith the apostle; and again, ‘You are come (not to the mount visible) unto mount Zion, and to the city of the living God.’

Converse and presence is only by benefit of the mind; were we dwelling in heaven by faith, we might be said to be in heaven before we were there; or rather heaven would come down unto our souls; Christ and all his glorious train would be intimate unto us. O then! we might say, My company is sweet, my fellowship glorious: he, whose presence enlightens, enlivens and beautifies heaven, is ever present with me: 'I have set the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. A bundle of myrrh is my Wellbeloved unto me, he shall lie all night betwixt by breasts.' O our passing joys and sweetnes! the source of all joys and sweetnes doth possess my heart. Blinded worldlings, you see but the outward garb of sense; saw you what were within, you could not but admire their happiness: 'the King's daughter is all glorious within.' Saw you your own selves in your own genuine colours, ye would run from yourselves, if it were possible: hell lodgeth within you, and you know it not: but anon, when the conscience is awakened, ye shall know it, to your dreadful experience.

15. *Heaven is the proper place where all excellency dwells, should we not then dwell mentally there?*

As the fields are most pleasant, fertile and beautiful, which lie nearest the perpendicular rays of the sun; so the more nearly we approach the 'Sun of righteousness,' the more vigorous and lively shall our condition be: how shall we bloom and flourish 'like a tree planted by the rivers of waters?' O how beautiful shall we become, in the eyes of God, angels, and saints! Worldlings, you live in a cold climate; can any thing befall you, except withering and decay? Come hither, this is the funny

sunny side of the world: were ye here, ye could not but cry out, 'The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage.'

16. *We are allowed to have our mind nowhere but in heaven, that only being free of the contagion of sin.*

To have the mind in heaven is safe; to let it fall down to earth is most dangerous: mostly from this do Satan, the world, and our vile hearts get such advantage against us: this is the place where Satan domineers; to dwell here, implies a submission to the sceptre of his government. No wonder so many mischiefs befall earth-worms. Heaven is the saint's proper soil: if ye be wise, O citizens of the new Jerusalem, range not without the borders of your kingdom, lest some evil befall you.

17. *According to the excellency of our knowledge, so is the sphere of our activity; and consequently our fitness for doing great things for our Lord's glory.*

Who are most accomplished for the greatest actions and sufferings for Christ? Who, but these who are most above? If the study of human sciences renders a man in some measure excellent; what will the study of this hyperphysical science do? all other sciences are subordinate to this; it being a practical science, directing and illuminating our minds, in the right and solid discernment of all things. Know much of God; and know much of all things.

18. *What we know and are affected by, that we are; if by earth, we are earthly; if by heaven, we are heavenly.*

The difference betwixt saints, and all worldlings, lies much here; as the man is, so are his thoughts. Do the faculties of thy soul run most

out on heaven and glory? Doth heaven more affect thee than earth? Is it the ordinary frame of thy spirit? O the blessedness of thy condition! little canst thou conceive what is reserved for thee. But doth thy mind run most upon earth? Is it the most delightful object? and is heaven a foreign and strange-like subject to meditate upon? Is that the ordinary harmony of thy spirit? O thy dreadful condition! who can conceive it? But thou shalt know it ere long.

And how sweetly and cordially are we invited to come up from this base earth, and partake of that noblefellowship with the Father and the Son? the gates of glory are cast wide open to all; the wells of salvation are not sealed: if you be eternally thrust out, blame yourselves. He complains, exhorts, and argues with men, 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. Why will ye die? Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.' Ah fools! what are ye doing? doubt ye whether to come up or not? what have ye there but broken cisterns? Here, O here, are the fountains, the rivers, the oceans of living waters. Beware, Sirs, this become not your eternal complaint, Heaven was wide open, and I would not come in; and now, wo, wo, wo for evermore! the gates are eternally shut against me.

19. *It is dangerous to take a superficial view of glory, and no more: we are to search, and die searching; since earth hath so strange a power upon creatures composed of earth.*

O heirs of this never-fading glory, need we speak of the things you have a view of, far above all our expressions? See you not what is inexpressible? Are you not ravished with the goodness of your

your lot? Have you not been often on the top of mount Pisgah, viewing the higher and lower world, the vast difference betwixt the childrens inheritance, and that of the bastards? Have ye not received a taste of the delicious fruits that grow on the tree of life? Have ye not received in your souls, some sparkles of that heavenly joy and love? Have you not experimentally seen the nothingness and vanity of all created enjoyments? How is it then, that so many of you are so base and carnal in your deportment, as to make it difficult to discern betwixt your walk, and that of the sons of the earth? What! back to the earth again, after you have received so high an elevation? You somewhat resemble the fallen angels. Sirs, (if it be so, that you are fallen indeed,) it is an hundred to one, if ever you approach so near heaven, on this side of time: apostasy in the smallest degree is very dreadful. Be it so, you cannot totally and finally become earth again: yet, is it not sad, never to come near to the first attainments? as it mostly falls out in fallen saints: even David's last ways were below his first. But however, can ye endure so to disgrace your Lord's glory, before the eyes of vile worldlings, who esteem heaven a well-invented *chimera*? Can you feed their Atheism? and dare you shake the faith of weak ones? and be the sad occasion of many's going back at the birth? Either walk in an heavenly manner, or profess no religion at all: if your conversation be like that of dunghill wretches, wherein do ye glorify God more than they? Yea, you do dishonour him more a thousand times. Christians, can you forget your sweet country, in this melancholy wilderness? Is not death at your hand? Our time is short, for making ready for eternity; ere we get a sight

of the vain world, death will assault us. What is time, but a preparation for eternity? Were there not a connexion betwixt these two, verily time were of no consideration: have we lost the real use of our senses? does not all we see, or hear, invite us to go up, and leave this despicable world? Every earthly enjoyment hath vanity written upon it; every thing here hath a frowning countenance: are we not 'looking for a city whose builder and maker is God?' Let us be persuaded of the truth of so great things; let us 'embrace the promises, ' and confess we are strangers and pilgrims on 'earth,' that the natives of this world may perceive 'we seek a country.' Cry out, Sirs, Adieu, you gilded enjoyments, abstracted from the life of all enjoyments; ah glistering nothings! what are you all to me? what to one who hath found the enduring substance? welcome, a thousand times welcome, eternal joys, substantial pleasures, enduring comforts! welcome enjoyment of God, in any measure, tho' through a glass. Mount up, O my soul on the seraphic wings of heavenly meditation: 'Thou' thou 'haft lien among the pots, yet shalt thou be as the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.' Let not a low sight content thee, never rest, until thou be over the borders of time, where thou shalt be at rest, and free of trouble: here is nothing but 'vanity and vexation 'of spirit.'

20. *Scripture gives us a discovery of things beyond time.*

By a spiritual discernment of the scriptures, in their own genuine sense, we might attain unto the sublime knowledge of excellent things: they are wisest, who are best studied in them; faith is an instrument, whereby the soul takes up aright the things

things contained therein. And doth not every page smell of heaven and glory? The glory of God, and intellectual creatures, and everlasting enjoyment of him, is the subject and scope of all. Nay, this great volume of this visible All, demonstrates somewhat invisible, of a far higher nature: 'The heavens declare the glory of God: the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made.' How many draughts and emblems of glory may we behold, in the glorious fabric of heaven and earth? How doth the Spirit set before our eyes, that inconceivable glory to come, in types and borrowed terms, drawn from the glories of this lower region? Verily they have the advantage of others, who have inclination and opportunity, for searching into the admirable works of God's creation: for such is the nature of things visible, that they lead us to these that are invisible.

21. *Glory is not to be considered after a philosophical manner, being altogether supernatural.*

To inquire metaphysically into the nature of this excellent glory, is not our intention: we desire not to speak other things than what is written. Subtle inquiries are cold, having small influence on the affections, the inflaming of which is our aim. A gospel view of glory, in a scripture-dialect, is our design. That the scripture termeth heaven, a *city*, and again, a *bride*, shews that all emblems come wonderfully short, in representing such inconceivable things; and therefore discourses thereof are not to be examined, according to vulgar rules. Glory may be understood, either formally, or subjectively; which is the supernatural elevation of the creature; or objectively, which is the manifestation of God to the creature: the glory

glory then to be revealed is a supernatural perfection, and that in kind. Natural wisdom, ever so intense, is not glory: the splendor of the sun, though a thousand times gradually augmented above what it is, is still but natural glory, and not a supernatural elevation. Every thing is perfect, beautiful, excellent, or glorious (which terms express the same) in its own kind; but in heaven, all are supernaturally excellent, as being elevated far above the reach of their natural beings.

22. *All creatures, from the highest to the lowest, are passively capable of supernatural elevation.*

What baser things than dust? and yet that is admitted within the new Jerusalem: yet may intellectual beings be said (Gr. *kat' exochen*, i.e. by way of eminence) to be only capable of glory: and then we may say, Glory is the highest elevation (actual) of a creature, in its being, faculties, virtues, operations, and relations, by which it is enabled to enjoy God to the full.

23. *Nothing leads us so excellently to the knowledge of glory, as grace its forerunner.*

Grace being an endowment above the strength of nature, what is it else but young glory? For that the knowledge of the one will lead us by the hand unto the knowledge of the other: as glory is grace in the bloom and fullest vigour; so grace is glory in the bud and first springing: the one is holiness begun, the other holiness perfected; the one is the 'beholding of God darkly, as thro' a glass,' the other 'holding him face to face.' Christians, are you considering, that in part you are glorified already? Tho' it be small, 'like a grain of mustard seed,' and obscured by corruption and mortality; a little patience, and you shall see it grow out wonderfully, in all dimensions, and flourish, and bloom, and be fruitful

fruitful and fragrant through never-ending ages. You have tasted that the Lord is good, you shall swim, ere long, in the oceans of goodness; you have had his amiable countenance lifted up upon you; a little hence shall ye for ever dwell under the noon-tide rays of his ravishing face: some drops of celestial joy have fallen into your hearts, unto ravishment; you shall enter into the ocean itself ere long: you are walking with the Lamb, in the days of your pilgrimage; 'you shall follow him anon 'whithersoever he goes.' May ye not then attain to some conception of glory? the tree may be known by its seed; the direct rays, by the reflex. As for you, worldlings, who know not what it is to have communion with God, the very natural consideration of such dazzling glory, may rouse up your senses, and cause you understand what you never heretofore considered.

24. *Saints get some discoveries more evident than thro' a glass, which may be termed glimpses of glory.*

The saints, on this side of time, are not seldom more than victors; they have sights above that of faith: O the sights! O the sweetnes! O the ravishments, more like those of overcomers, than fighters, which the saints experience! why may we not then attain to some apprehensions of the glory above? may not the experience of ourselves and others lead us into the discovery of wonderful things: no doubt, the new creation is a supernatural elevation, which we shall never be able to attain unto, thro' the ordinary and common influencing of the Spirit on our natural faculties; his marvellous light is of another nature, than that common light which he communicateth 'to every one that cometh into the world.' Natural excellency, ever so gradual-

ly perfected is still natural; gradual difference changeth not the kind: join all common graces of reprobates together, could they make up a saving or supernatural? Many carnals make not a heavenly; many material excellencies make not up a spiritual: grace is a heavenly, new principle infused, not the perfecting of what hath been already in the worldling. OSirs, beware of being beguiled here: the intense natural knowledge of divine mysteries, with the overflowings of love and joy arising therefrom, may dazzle our own eyes, and the eyes of the spectators: look that you have heaven indeed within you, else you cannot enter there. O to be partakers of the divine nature! O for the noble mind of Christ! O to be transformed in the spirit of our minds! 'cause thy wind to blow 'on our dry bones, and we shall live.' Be not beguiled, Sirs, 'as ye sow so shall you reap:' have you the immortal seed within you? look well to it, let it not be choked with cares, anxieties, and vanities; though the beginning appear small and inconsiderable, the end will be wonderfully glorious and excellent: the wonders to be manifested upon thee, will be the perfection of what thou hast got already: 'If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead be in you, he shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by the Spirit that dwelleth in you.'

25. *All things invite to this excellent study, and there is no argument against it.*

We heartily beseech you, to step up to the top of mount Pisgah, and take a view of our ravishing country: what have you to say against the business? 'Come and see,' will answer all your objections: whatever you can say against the matter, will prove it. Speak ye of melancholy? O what sweetness is here! of inability, and dimness of knowledge?

knowledge? O the lightness of this city! all things are obscure and smoky below. Speak we of hindrances from our necessary worldly affairs? O how doth the sight of this glory oil the wheels, and cheer up to every duty? Will any term it an unknown subject? Nothing more fruitful, and fuller of varieties; nothing more pleasing than glory. Art thou worldly-minded? O then study heaven; the excellency of the one will cause the other to disappear. Thinkest thou hell and destruction are more to be considered by thee? Come, and thou shalt behold, that the discovery of glory discovers all things, since there is no danger for a trembling broken-hearted sinner: the way to glory is the path of life, the new and living way. 'We are not come unto the mount that might not be touched, and that burned with fire; but unto mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, to God the judge of all, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'

26. *This knowledge is only from above, and to be asked of God.*

Thou inexhaustible original of all light, life, and fulness, draw up our minds to thee, from this proper habitation of the devil and his slaves; and hold us ever with thee, lest we fall down to this dung-hill again: 'Then shall we be joyful in glory, we shall sing aloud on our beds, we shall speak of the greatness of thy kingdom, of the excellency of thy majesty, and of the glory of thine inheritance in the saints in light: then shall we go out with joy, and be led forth with gladness: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before us in-

‘ to singing: then shall we renew our strength, we
 ‘ shall mount up with wings, as eagles: we shall run,
 ‘ and not be weary; and walk, and not be faint.’

INVITATION.

HEre Tabor's tops, surmounting far the marches
 Of those ethereal most majestic arches,
 Reaching beyond the azure canopy,
 Which envious mask hides glory from our eye,
 Into the new creation, whose bright glory
 Would cause earth's splendor vanish, make us sorry
 We've plac'd a grain of love on things below,
 Since only 'bove this world all sweets do flow.

Ascend the mount, aspiring souls, and enter
 Within the cloud, fear not, draw near love's center:
 Go in to th' privy chambers of the King,
 If princely minds, and flowing hearts you bring:
 But wanting these, I straitly you command,
 In my Lord's dreadful Name aloof to stand.
 There shall you see your lover's lovely face,
 His heav'nly gesture, his divinest grace:
 There shall his voice melodious charm your ears,
 And from your heart shall banish quite all fears:
 There shall the smell of 's garments, all perfum'd,
 Refresh your fainting sp'rits, with cares consum'd:
 There shall you feast upon the cheering wine,
 That crimson liquor of the only vine.
 You and your Lord shall clasp in one love-tie,
 Ne'er to be loos'd through all eternity.
 Your thoughts shall dive into love's deep abyfs,
 And scan, what without all dimensions is:
 Your heart (surpassing joy !) in your love's breast,
 And his in your's, eternally shall rest.
 In fine, your fenses, soul and all shall ly,
 Bathing in sweetness everlastingly.



A.

GLIMPSE OF GLORY;
OR,
A GOSPEL-DISCOVERY OF EMMANUEL'S
LAND.

THOU glory and beauty of the higher paradise, fulfil thy promise upon me, in letting me see thee in thy beauty, ' and that land that is very far off ' a discovery of thine excellency, a taste of thy sweetness should cause me overlook all sublunary things, should enable my glory to proclaim thine aloud before the sons of men. Let thy strength appear in weakness ; thou canst perfect glory and praise by babes, and nothings ; get thyself glory, and I have all I can desire.

2. All joys ! am not I exalted on the high places of the earth ? Wonderful ! what strange things are these ? ' What hath GOD done ? ' Shall I write, or shall I not ? What avails earth's idiom here, which falleth short in the full expression of earthly things ? Shall I not debase my Lord's glory, if I endeavour to represent it by the low, base, and childish expressions of the language of men ? But since our condescending Lord is pleased, in borrowed terms, to express these inexpressible enjoyments,

ments, which ‘neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, or the heart of man conceived,’ we will follow his footsteps; being certain, though our expressions reach not the brim of that ocean, yet they may surpass most men’s esteem of it. May we not then, in borrowed speeches and dark emblems, delineate the glory of his kingdom, the excellency of his person, and ‘the riches of his inheritance in the saints in light, until we come unto the fulness of the stature of Christ,’ when we shall see and express him as he is?

3. *The soul must be elevated on the wings of heavenly meditation, before it get a sight of the promised land.*

Now my soul, thou art got up to the top of this sublime and majestic mountain, overlooking the celestial Canaan. Ah, my senses are not celestial! yet do the things I see and hear fill me with ‘joy unspeakable, and full of glory?’ I cannot tell what my faculties are filled with. Words are narrow for such high and wide things. But, should we not express these things according to our measure?

4. *Glory is rather to be admired by mortals, than understood.*

I am quite amazed, confounded and ravished at once. O eternal dwelling-place of blessed men and angels! and of the man infinitely more excellent than all! How am I affected with thy various beauty, excellent glory, and delightful sweetnes! What appearest thou now, O lower world? Thou art the dunghill; this the palace-royal: thou art the footstool; this the throne. Were the curtains betwixt the higher and lower world drawn aside, all lower glories would disappear; all glories are here, and only here: this is the world. Where shall we find emblems any where else, sufficient

ficient to represent in the thousand thousandth part or property, one of the infinite beauties, various glories, admirable excellencies, transcendent virtues, wherewith this land is stored ? Verily it is a large land indeed, like a confluence of an infinite number of worlds. O my Lord, thy report was true, ' In my Father's house are many mansions.' The earth is nothing to the visible heavens, and the visible to the invisible. O vast land ! are they not shallow fools, who boast themselves of shovelfuls of earth ? But worms are much taken up with dunghills. Nothing below this narrow vault of the visible heavens can bound the outgoings of capacious and sublime spirits.

5. *We may imagine, in this our childhood, childishly ; and so conceive of glory in a metaphoric way.*

And O the beauty and sweetness wherewith this blessed land is adorned ! Earth in its May-clothing, with its various beauties, appeared somewhat delightful before ; but all former apprehensions are swallowed up ; all the senses and faculties are lost in the endless maze of infinite varieties of beauties and excellencies. Are not the eyes almost ravished from their proper orbs, by the strong attractive virtue of ravishing objects ? Are they not dazzled and confounded ? What varieties ! what glories ! what numberless numbers ! every object is enough to allure unto ravishment : but the conspiracy of them all cannot be told. How are the ears charmed with numberless variety of melodious raptures ! so that the ears become harmony itself. How do incessant and full gales of odoriferous exhalations perfume and fill with a surpassing sweetnes, not only the brain, but every vein, artery and sinew : that which enters the mouth, every where, surpasseth,

passeth Ambrosia and Nectar. The circumjacent spirits have so pleasant embraces, as they still refresh the body, that cannot be weary. What shall I say? Am I not nonplussed here? Lo, all beauties, both material and immaterial, here! all things are here in an eminent formal manner. O mighty God, this world is a masterpiece of thy power, wisdom, and goodness indeed; did I never see more of thy ravishing attributes, than what is imprinted on this golden world, should I not be ravished with an eternal rapture? This is a land befitting the inhabitants, all things are ever in their May-clothing, they bloom and flourish with an eternal and glorious verdure, seeming, as it were, all to outshine one another, in wonderful beauty and excellency: what would an earthly paradise appear here? Shall we speak of gold and gems, trampled upon by beasts? Sure the sun in its strength would blush to let forth its rays, on so beautiful a place, the least stone here would look him out of countenance: nothing in the lower world which is not here; and nothing here which is to be seen in the lower world. If we speak any thing in earthly idiom, it must be in perfect contradictions; all is covered over with all varieties of beds of lilies, and roses, and dropping sweet-smelling myrrh; every where the vines flourish, the mandrakes send forth an odoriferous exhalation, the pomegranates bud, the grapes and all fruit hang in goodly order; all is overflown with Ambrosia, milk and honey; all is an orchard, all a champaign field, every way is the sunny side of the hill, and also a pleasant shadow, every place is filled with odoriferous gales; and yet there is nothing but one sweet and endless calm: the winds that blow here are like vital and animal spirits. Are they not these

these heart-refreshing, and soul-rejoicing breathings of the Spirit of life? All are planted with trees, every one of which doth specifically differ from one another, and bears every month, every hour, every minute, ten thousand kinds of fruits ; and every fruit containeth ten thousand qualities ; and every quality ten thousand virtues, and every virtue ten thousand delights, and every delight is enough to confound myriads of worlds of men and angels. All things send forth melodious notes, odoriferous perfumes, and what may charm thousands of senses, differing specifically from one another : all things here do more than contain all the virtues and excellencies of sun, moon, and stars. O what every thing is, how inconceivable, and beyond imagination ! this world is all things, it is a palace, also it is a glorious and stately city, decked with the glory and comeliness of her builder ; ' whose light is like unto a ' stone most precious,' whose walls are high, and beautified with ' twelve gates, and at the gates ' are twelve angels : whose figure is four-square, ' whose circuit twelve thousand furlongs, and the ' height of the wall, an hundred forty-four cu- ' bits ; the building thereof is of jasper, and the ' city of pure gold, as it were transparent glas.' If the foundations thereof be of pearl, the houses, streets, and walls of gold, what must the deckings of the houses be ? If the ordinary stuff exceed the price of the diamond, who can weigh our most noble jewel of the New Jerusalem ? Sure all the excellency of this lower universe would be of no reckoning here ; yea, many worlds are not to be valued. Must not this be a glorious and delightful city, which is immediately enlightened with the uncreated glory of JEHOVAH, and the

Lamb ? ' All the kings of the earth bring in their ' glory and honour hither : ' all other glories and excellencies are swallowed up, and concentrated here : all joys, all pleasures, all contentments, all desires are for ever here.

6. *We cannot be so high, in our own conceptions of glory, but still we may be higher.*

But let us draw near, that we may discover more of these wonderful things : what ravishing melody is this ? Were it not heaven to dwell within the sound of heaven's melody ? I am altogether ravished ! O ' it is good to be here ! ' O the sweet, sweet, sweet frame the inhabitants are in ! their hallelujahs have converted me almost into joy itself. But what can I say ? the idiom of glory hath a wonderful efficacy and deepness, beyond our shallow uptakings, as far transcending earth's language, as immortality doth transcend mortality : and I want an ear celestial, musical, to perceive distinctly, and understand these angelical songs, and wonderful expressions of joy, love and admiration, in the higher house : but the very sound is enough to ravish all our senses. Hear I not something like the song of Moses and the Lamb ?

" We will sing unto the Lord ; for he hath triumphed gloriously, his enemies hath he overwhelmed with everlasting shame : he is our strength, and our song, and he is become our salvation. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power ; who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders ? Thou in thy mercy hast led forth thy people, which thou hast redeemed ; thou hast guided them, in thy strength, unto thy holy habitation : we have a strong city, salvation hath our God provided, for walls and bulwarks.

bulwarks. We will greatly rejoice in the Lord, our souls shall incessantly and eternally be joyful in our God ; for he hath clothed us with the garments of salvation, he hath covered us with the robes of righteousness. Thou hast awaked, and put on strength, O arm of the Lord ; art thou not it, which dried up the Red sea ? that hath made the deeps of the sea a way for thy ransomed to pass over ? Therefore the redeemed of the Lord do return, and come with singing unto Sion, and everlasting joys upon their heads ; and sorrow and sighing have fled away. Sing, ye heavens, shout, ye lower parts of the earth, break forth into melody, ye mountains ; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. Behold, we dwell on high, our place of defence is the munition of rocks ; our eyes do see the King in his beauty ; our eyes do behold Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall never be taken down. And in this mountain hath the Lord of hosts made, unto all people, a feast of fat things ; and hath swallowed up death in victory ; and hath wiped away all tears from all faces. The Lord is a sun and shield ; he hath given grace and glory ; no good thing hath he with-held from these who have walked uprightly. How excellent is thy loving kindness ! we are abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou hast made us drink of the rivers of thy pleasures : thou hast turned our mourning into dancing ; thou hast put off our sackcloth, and girded us with gladness : the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places ; yea, we have a goodly heritage : thou hast shewed unto us the path of life ; in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for ever-

more. Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests; and we shall reign for ever and ever. Cry, and shout; thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." What a golden life is this? Am not I come into mount Zion? Know I not now by experience, that the conversation of mortals may be above? O what a ravishing frame am I now in! the melody of heaven draws me nearer and nearer; I cannot, I will not, I may not rest, until I look within the vail.

7. *Christ, the desire of all nations, because he is God, most fully manifested to finite capacities.*

O strange! nothing but wonders! are not the whole inhabitants of the higher Canaan all in a sea of delight, love, and admiration? Are they not all flocking round about, as contending who shall be most satiate with the matchless beauty and loveliness of the white and ruddy One, the Standardbearer among ten thousand? O the Day's-man betwixt God and creatures! the wonder of wonders, the glory and triumph, and shame of creatures, the beauty of heaven, the admiration of earth, the compend and model of heaven and earth, and all things, the life of all joys, marrow of all loves, flower of all desires, fountain of all sweetnes, sun of all glory, the everlasting delight of the Father, and ravishment of men and angels, the centre whereunto all hearts, all loves, all eyes do eternally and incessantly run, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express character of his person!

person! Christ Jesus, God-man, the ever-flourishing stock and the stem of Jesse, the plant of renown! all are chanting thus.

Speak no more of beauties, men and angels, all lesser glories are quite swallowed up: this is the only beauty, the only excellency, by the borrowed rays of whose loveliness, we are all rendered glorious: out of his fulness have we all received; let us cast down these massy crowns of glory at his feet; 'For of him, and by him, and through him, and to him are all things.'

8. *No manifestation of God so full and sweet to creatures, as through Emmanuel; so infinite is the distance.*

O! my only Wellbeloved, thou art God, thou art God, the infinite JEHOVAH; and therefore thou art become my All, and only One; none but him! I disdain all yesterday-beings for a Wellbeloved: yet, since thou art a creature also, thou art more lovely as to me; wert thou not man, as well as God, I could not enjoy thee so familiarly and nearly: though sin in itself cannot be the object of joy, yet the result thereof is surpassing joyful: this world of free grace transcendever so many worlds of another kind. The enjoyment of God, as a Redeemer, Husband, Brother, is another manner of enjoyment, than of God Creator. Happy, happy we, that ever we were miserable! we had been undone, if we had not been undone. We ruined ourselves, but thou hast made us up; far, far above all that we had to lose: O sweet debt of thy free redeeming grace! shall not every moment of eternity augment my obligation? I am thy insolvent debtor, O my Lord; and therefore my happiness shall grow and bloom throughout all eternity.

9. *One sight of Christ is enough to ravish even so many.*

The first sight of thine eyes hath stricken me with everlasting admiration! many excellent beauties do my blessed eyes behold, but thou dost infinitely transcend them all. Thy countenance hath a beauty and excellency above all possible created glory! Increated glory rays through the vail of this human nature! my blessed eyes, a thousand times blessed eyes, which behold the man who is God! Fellow-beholders, this sight hath cast us for ever into a wondering frame! the more we behold, the more we are inflamed; the more we love, the more we behold! O wonderful eternal circle! hence joys inutterable, inexpressible, hence the sweet praising disposition, hence admiration, hence beholding; and thus throughout eternity.

10. *All our enjoyment nothing, till we see him face to face.*

O flower of excellency! O ocean of loveliness! mortality could take up no considerable portion of thee; the most excellent of their discourses was childish nonsense: nothing, but seeing thee face to face, can discover thy worth. Verily I never saw thee until now; and therefore love and joy were never in their highest vigour. I love, I love now indeed! what though I might be said to love thee in thy absence, and to be filled 'with joy unspeakable and glorious,' with the very sound of thy name? These drops are nothing to the ocean, the tasting to the banquet. O sweet, sweet! nothing but joy! who can stand beside infinite love, and not be inflamed! Am I not almost converted into love itself? O delightful ravishing fire! what greater happiness than to burn here for evermore.

II. *The*

11. *The soul is not perfectly happy, until it rest, without interruption, in the Wellbeloved's love.*

Now we are for ever in one another's arms; the days of heaven shall not put a period to these love-embraces: 'Thou hast set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death,' the coals thereof would burn up hell itself. Nothing but full eternity, incessant enjoyment, will satiate this burning love; and therefore art thou unto me, 'as a bundle of myrrh, which lieth for ever betwixt my breasts.' This is the place where love doth bloom, with an eternal verdure: no ups and downs, and hidings of his face; no love-sickness, through the want of personal possession; no need of apples, or flaggons of wine; no contending with time and days, because of their seeming lazy pace; nor with interposing clouds, lingering death, sin and mortality: nothing but full enjoyment; I am as I would be; I see thy face to the full; and therefore my happiness overflows the banks.

12. *The mutual interest betwixt Christ and his chosen is an eternally sweet consideration.*

Thou art mine, my dearest Lord, and I am thine; I was thine from eternity, and thou art become mine to eternity. O my large, wide, broad inheritance! thou art mine in full possession: O my happiness, my happiness, my loves overflow, my joys are in their spring-tide! 'Even thou art mine, and thy desire is towards me.' No wonder that I am ravished with thy beauty: but, art thou ravished with mine! wast thou not at rest, until thou hadst brought me to these higher chambers of glory, that thou mightest be delighted for ever in my fellowship? What am I to thee? If there be any thing in me can draw one look from thee, it is thine, only

only thine, and not mine own. If the rays of this borrowed loveliness in me redound back upon thee, thou hast received but what is thine own. Beholdest thou ravishing loveliness in me, who am what I am only of thee? what boundless oceans of sweetnes, what infinite worlds of beauty are in thy matchless Self! many an excellent object have I seen, but thou hast ravished my heart from them all. I have found, I have seen him, who is only lovely: this fair One hath my heart for evermore. Choicest beauties of yesterday, were it possible for you to draw my affections in the least aside? I have tasted of creatures sweetnes, but they could not satisfy: shall it not be my endless exercise, incessantly to kiss, and draw ravishing consolations from the lips, that brought the joyful tidings of this boundless happiness? None but thee! if I love and delight in other beauties, it is as they are decked with thy loveliness; as they are emblems, shadows, and reflexions of thee, who art all 'together lovely:' but thou art the substantial beauty, thou art the beauty! let innumerable millions of worlds of beauties stand round about thee, one ray of thy transcendency would eclipse them all. Beholders can you tell what you see? O his beauty, his beauty! what more can be said, than that it infinitely transcends the conceptions of men and angels?

Other loves are but the picture and resemblance of love, to this sublime and noble love of Jesus: this is love indeed. Should I speak of flames? am I not entered into the ocean, the floods, the worlds of love? 'for God is love, and he that dwelleth in ' love, dwelieth in God, and God in him.' Is not this a sweet ravishing habitation? what joy to think, that this is my eternal repose? I dwell in the

the midst of hot burning flames, without harm, as in a bed of roses, and an orchard of delights.

13. *The glorified soul, reflecting on former things, looks upon all as childish.*

This is 'the fulness of the stature of Christ;' how spacious, to receive incessantly floods of love! before my soul was narrow, now it is larger than the heaven of heavens. O the outrunnings of my soul after thee: before they were small streams, now they are huge floods; small things are not now noticed; all our desires are now swallowed up. What is the moon when the sun doth appear? How mighty, mighty art thou, O love of Jesus! wouldest thou not downweigh innumerable worlds? Had I known in the ten thousandth part on earth, what now I know, the world would have imagined me quite beside myself: how wonderfully would I have spoken, written, and done? But, ah! how poorly and childishly did we speak of thee? What joy, that mortality is done away?

14. *Saints and angels shall be ever going forth into the matchless excellencies of their Wellbeloved; and running them, as it were, over and over again.*

Though I behold thee, as thou art; yet am I ever supplied with new matter of admiration: when more ages are past than atoms in the creation, I shall not be at a loss for matter to express thine infinite excellency: men and angels, when shall you dive so deep, as you may dive no further? But shall I not for ever delineate thy beauty now, when I have thee in my arms? Sirs, shall we not for ever speak of him, of whom too much cannot be spoken? No injury is here done to the Father and blessed Spirit; their glory and excellency do visibly shine here: and do these arms embrace God, these eyes see him? O the

mystery of godliness! men and angels, you are all astonished, God visibly manifested! O wonder of wonders! is not thy name rightly termed, *Wonderful*? O my elevated thoughts! O eternity! eternity! thou shalt be filled with wondering: what glory shines in this man's face! thy countenance, Wellbeloved, hath a non-such Majesty. The saints have the face of glorified creatures, and no more; but the Majesty of thy countenance is altogether divine. O perfection's flower, and marrow of loveliness! none who see thee, will inquire, 'What art thou ' more than another beloved?' O thy face, thy ravishing face! indeed thou art ' the white and ruddy, the ' Standard-bearer amongst a myriad: thy face, my Wellbeloved, is like the face of the Son of God; every smile is full of inexpressible joy; 'For God, ' thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above all thy fellows.' Is not this he, men and angels, 'whose visage was more marred than any ' man's?' in whom the world saw no beauty, or desirableness? Is not this he, whose face was spit upon by the filth and offscourings of men? Verily, Wellbeloved, though thou art 'the same yesterday, to ' day, and for evermore;' yet appearest thou far changed from what thou appearedst on earth. O but then thou didst strangely mask thy divine beauty with the vail of mortality, which now thou hast done away, that thy glory may shine forth in its full splendor before thy chosen! O thy stately majestic head, only worthy to be 'crowned with glory and honour,' to be exalted far above all creatures! strange! this majestic head, that was once beset with a crown of thorns, is now surrounded with the brightness, which carries in its bosom boundless joys. This was 'the joy that was set before ' him.' O blessed we, that have such an head! the head

head of this golden world is of *fine gold*. O how beautiful are the ornaments of thy head! O thou wouldest entangle all creatures for ever in the folds of overcoming love! how am I ravished with thine eyes! heaven and glory dwells in every look; the first glance of them did strike heaven and love into an eternal rapture: nothing can resist their overcoming emanations of love. And, did these eyes gush forth tears, through bitter grief and sorrow? Could ever the least sadness and darkness enter into such divine orbs of light and joy? thou hast overcome me with thine eyes, my fair One. One look of thee, and no more, would ravish ten thousand worlds of men and angels. O the noon-day light of thy countenance for ever and ever! and who can tell the comeliness of thy fragrant, beautiful cheeks? And what can be said of thy rosy lips? how do they perfume this land with their fragrant myrrh, that incessantly drops from them? O what boundless ocean of grace is poured into them! 'Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever and ever.' Every kiss of them is an heaven of sweetnes. I am filled and overcome with this mirrour of glory! 'The smell of thine ointment,' afar off, did ravish my heart; but now I am more, ten thousand times more, than ravished! one drop of this myrrh would sweeten ten thousand oceans of all imaginable bitterness. And O thy princely hands, fit to sway the sceptre of this ever-flourishing kingdom, delightful habitation! can there be a more blessed posture? 'His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.' Am not I circled in the arms of unsearchable love? 'The eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are everlasting arms.' These blessed arms, that were stretched upon the cross for me, do embrace me sweetly,

for evermore. Whether thy love doth more shine forth in the first, or latter posture, cannot be told: but sure thy love in all its resplendency, passeth all created understanding. O the glory, sweetnes, and excellency of thy belly! O thy bowels of compassion! O what rivers of water do from thence flow out incessantly upon us! And what is comparable to thy stately legs? How glorious are thine outgoings among us! O my King and God, when thou 'trodest upon the high places of the earth, its foundations were shaken. How didst thou trample the people in thine anger, and the kingdoms in thy fury? Thou camest skipping over the mountains, leaping over the hills, for the salvation of thy people.' Blessed men and angels, what can be conceived, or expressed of such a wonderful person? O his stately deportment! every part of him, so to speak, is an infinite mass of beauty. What a beauty then must all these numberless beauties, composed in one, be? Is not 'thy countenance as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars?' Thy majesty is wonderfully various, and every variety the height of excellency. By sweet experience I may say, 'Thy mouth is most sweet:' the relicts of the impression of one of thy love-kisses may fill the soul with exquisite joys, throughout endless ages. Suppose a creature filled with all possible creature-sweetnes, one kiss of thy most sweet mouth would swallow up all. O the words of thy mouth, passing in sweetnes the honey distilling from the honeycomb! thy voice, thy ravishing voice: even to stand without the gates of New Jerusalem, and hear the sound thereof, might wrap up a creature in eternal ravishment. And is it possible, my matchless One, to attain the furthermost of thy infinite perfections, though but one simple excellency?

Let

Let me rather further and further into the ocean of thy loveliness, through endless ages; yet shall I ever be in the entry: nevertheless will I pay thee the tribute of praises, and extol thee before men and angels; and speak of thine excellency, while my being remains. I praise thee, not because I am able to shew forth thy worth fully; but strong love doth constrain me, that for ever I must be expressing, and for ever the conclusion must be, 'Thou art altogether lovely;' for to thee alone doth this epithet appertain. You chiepest of created excellencies, can this agree to you? Are you nothing but masses of pure, essential and unmixed love? Who but he, even he alone, is altogether lovely? He is all loves, all sweetnes, all ravishments: nothing but loveliness in him! his weakness, infirmity, poverty, contempt, crosses, losses, pains and death, flash forth the ravishing resplendencies of surpassing love and sweetnes. Heart and love, and all is gone from me. O the sublime thoughts of my elevated understanding! O this frame! this love! this sweetnes! all are unutterable; all are inexpressible!

15. *Even to stand beside the Chief of ten thousand, is a dignity inconceivably above the excellency of all creatures.*

That 'we might be ever with thee, and behold thy glory,' was one of thy great petitions, in the days of thy flesh; thousand, thousand times blessed I, that ever this was asked! thou askedst nobly, and thy Father granted like a king. Can we have more than to dwell in thy immediate presence? any enjoyment of thee, surpasseth that of the flower of created sweetnes: a sight of thee in a vision of the night, through a glafs, or any way, is ravishing, as I often have sweetly experienced, in the

the days of my pilgrimage : 'To touch the hem of ' thy garment,' or to see thee in thy infancy, was a happiness inexpressible. What shall we say to our lot, who are as near thee as our heart can desire? O this high, high, high dignity! O beloved estate! far above the heaven of heavens; nay, numberless heavens superadded to one another! And am I in thy immediate presence? even in the chambers of presence with thee, O lovely One, who inhabitest eternity! what honour is this? what shall I say of it? But thy ways are incomprehensible. This is the prerogative of the saints, this is it! 'What shall ' be done unto the man, whom the king delighteth to ' honour?' Spake he not in good earnest, when he told us of dignities, thrones, crowns, priesthoods, and possessions of all things? shall I ever enough wonder at the honour of the saints? This is the dignity of the overcomers, to wear the laurel, the badges of honour, the garlands of glory. How camest thou to all this, O silly self? hast thou been born to wear an immortal crown, to be overladen within and without with so great a weight of glory? Thou appearest indeed in the equipage of a king, decked with majesty, glory and honour, arrayed with wonderful excellency and comeliness. Wast thou not once, O thou silly I, a base worm, defiled with the very filth of hell? How hast thou robbed the Almighty of his glory, dishonoured his excellency, wronged his holiness, trampled upon his most precious things, on his blood; done what thou couldst to precipitate thyself into eternal perdition; forced the gates of that woful prison, O undone soul, to cover thyself with utter darkness from the charming beams of the Sun of righteousness? yet am here, even here, surrounded with inexpressible glory! many thousands, less deserving, are in

in the place of utter darkness. O thy love! thy love! which passeth all understanding! O thy free, free grace! 'O the height, and depth, and length, and breadth' of thy ways! my enjoyments are more than free; hath he not brought me over my deservings? But nothing can stand in the way of infinite love. Thou lovedst me, because thou lovedst me; and because thou lovedst me, I became lovely in thy sight. 'Not unto us, not unto us be the glory:' but unto JEHOVAH, and the Lamb be praise for ever and ever.

16. *The nearness of saints and angels to their Creator, and Redeemer, astonisheth them eternally.*

What astonishing condescension, to admit bits of nothing so near thee! can this thy way be ever enough admired? It is strange thou shouldest deign creatures with either thy love or thy hatred! 'What is man, that thou shouldest visit him? that thou shouldest notice him, and bring him into judgment?' but more wonderful! hast thou not 'crowned him with glory and honour?' Thou hast made him sit down beside thyself! he treadeth the lower world under his feet, he walketh upon the high places of the creation: O thy bounty! O thy condescension! should I stand so near my Lord the King? Since free love will have it thus, and it is not his way to create desires, and not fulfil them; strong love can take rest no where but in his naked embraces. On earth I was unsatisfied, oftentimes complaining of distance and absence; and when I found thee, 'I would not let thee go,' but held thee fast, until we entered into those glorious mansions: and how are my thoughts heightened, by beholding thee face to face? The nearer thee, the higher esteem and reverence; none can have low thoughts of thee, but they that know thee not.

17. *No knowledge, no evidence comparable to the noon-day evidence of glory.*

The first ray of thy infinite glory upon me discovers infinite varieties of wonders! Men and angels, are we not all an assembly of eternal wonders? and all the product of the noon-day vision of glory, not of ignorance? All the things of time, from the greatest to the smallest, are now seen to be wonders; howbeit little of them was discerned, and that in a brutish manner. Strange! O Beloved, thou art another manner of Christ than we spake of, in the days of our mortality: thy very name was scarce conceived. How came I hither with so little conceptions? Have I not begun to know, in the very first entry of eternity 'my knowledge on earth was of no evidence, in comparison of this noon-day vision of glory? as the man looks back on his infancy, as a mere brutish ignorance; and the man awakened, on his bypast dream; so do I now, on my most refined conceptions on earth. O the clear and sharp apprehension of a glorified capacity! do I not behold every thing, as it is in its own proper and naked being? All shadows have fled away, what wonder, to think what we were, and what we are! O the infinite power of omnipotent JEHOVAH! what a perfecting is this! but what cannot my Lord do?

18. *To be witnesses of the glory of JEHOVAH and the Lamb, is an inexpressible dignity.*

And dost thou manifest thyself, in such a manner to us? what is essential eternity to beings of yesterday? are we fit witnesses of thy glory? O infinite JEHOVAH, are we not before thee as nothing and vanity? May not the greatness of thy glory, if thou shouldst let it forth to the full, confound, even confound us to nothing? Its infinity no-

thing

thing can comprehend, but an infinite understanding: the furthermost of all created glory is nothing and vanity in thy presence, though it might seem somewhat among its like. Dart forth the full rays of your glory, all you creatures, you shall not dazzle these eyes which are fixed on a higher object.

19. *What he manifests to us, is a wonder; but the way of his manifesting it, is a wonder of wonders.*

Shall we not wonder again and again, and for ever, at the way thou hast taken to manifest so nearly and familiarly unto us, thy incomprehensible glory? hast thou not assumed the nature of a creature, that thou mightest converse the more intimately and condescendingly with us? To enjoy thee, in any way, requires an infinite condescension; the disproportion being infinite: but this, this is the most wonderful condescension possible! O this is the most excellent of all possible ways! O the wonderful soul-alluring glory that doth most sweetly dart upon us from the man, who is God! O eternally blessed I, who have such a Wellbeloved, in whom is all fulness! thou art a matchless one indeed. We have done for ever with other beloveds; what wonder I am so deeply in love with thee? what wonder I swim in floods of eternal satisfaction, who enjoy thee so familiarly? Can a creature be more happy? I am full, I am full, and can desire no more!

20. *To consider the change Christ hath undergone, is an eternally ravishing consideration.*

Is this he, who was born of the virgin Mary, in a stable, and laid in a manger? who for the most of his days was in a poor, obscure, contemptible condition; who was 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;' of no corporal beauty in the eyes of the beholders: and subject to all the infirmi-

ties of feeble mortals, except sin: who was deserted of the outgoing of the sweetness and love of God; nay, did drink from brim to bottom, the bitter cup of his Father's wrath; who was apprehended in an ignominious manner; betrayed, denied and forsaken of his own disciples; violently haled away to judgment, reviled, mocked, buffeted, and spit upon; accused of blasphemy, treason, madness, and whatever hellish heads could devise; then scourged, and set forth to the derision and laughter of the rascally multitude; then condemned to the vile and shameful death of the cross, for blasphemy and treason; and that by the petition of the vast multitudes gathered together to the passover, who preferred a base robber before him! The sentence was not sooner pronounced than executed: for he was hanged betwixt two thieves, in the sight of the multitude, exposed to the insults of devils and their slaves, who beheld this matchless one nailed to the accursed tree, and bled to death in great torment, and anguish of spirit: while the sun, clothed in mourning for his Lord, contrary to the course of nature, sympathised with the eclipsed Creator, and withdrew his beams from these who had eclipsed the light of the whole creation. Thus did my Wellbeloved continue for a long space, and gave up the ghost in great torment of body and spirit; yea, was buried, continued under the power of death for a time: and this, even this is the same. Behold, men and angels, behold and wonder at the man, who is the wonder of wonders, and whose name is termed Wonderful! Wellbeloved, thou appearest to be far changed, though thou be ever the same! thou only hast done heroically, O mighty Captain of the Lord's hosts: this was thy design from eternity: oughtest

est thou not first to have suffered, and then to enter into this incomprehensible glory? Thou hast graciously overcome, and satisfied avenging justice, incensed against the children of thy eternal delights: ‘Having spoiled principalities and powers, thou madest a shew of them openly, triumphing over them on the cross: for though thou, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; yet madest thou thyself of no reputation, and becamest obedient even unto the death: wherefore God also hath highly exalted thee, and given thee a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven, earth, and under the earth.’ Wast thou not as low as the grave? and yet thou hast ‘ascended on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for men?’ Art thou not he, ‘who livest and wast dead? and behold, thou art alive for evermore! who wast low and despised; and behold, thou art exalted above all created heavens for ever! who didst weep, and sigh, and groan; and behold, thou art surrounded with boundless joys for evermore! who reignest victoriously, and wast in the form of a servant; and behold thou reginest in glorious majesty for evermore! Art thou not a wonderful One indeed! shall men and angels ever enough admire thee? though every moment of eternity shall be filled with admiration of my ravished heart.

21. *God manifested in the flesh for ever a mystery.*

And is dust and ashes for ever exalted to such an incomprehensible pitch of glory? O dust, how camest thou hither? strange! that the Almighty hath exalted thee above sun, moon, and stars; and hath brought thee into his immediate presence, to carry the least tincture of supernatural heavenly glory upon thee, to become the temple of the Holy

Ghost! But, men and angels, what are your conceptions of this dust, to be the temple, wherein the high and lofty One, the Almighty JEHOVAH, the eternal consubstantial Son of God, doth personally dwell, and with which he is personally united? Is not this a mystery? Is not this an infinite abyss, men and angels, into whose furthermost you shall never be able to dive?

22. *That God should bring about the highest exaltation of human nature, through man's horrid ingratitude, an ocean of wonders.*

To think that these bodily eyes behold my Redeemer, might astonish ten thousand worlds: are we not all overwhelmed in astonishment? is not every one crying, What hath God done? O thy incomprehensible ways! O thy irresistible power! O thy unfathomable wisdom! O thy love, thy boundless love! ' love that passeth all understanding; ' strange! hath the Almighty exalted thee, O man's nature, unto this incomprehensible dignity? it was much that thou receivedst the characters of divine majesty and excellency; yet more to be admitted into friendship and converse with the great and dreadful Former of all. O! are not such gradations of wonder, like millions of worlds, placed above millions of worlds, and again, and again, and for evermore? Is not man infinitely obliged to such a Sovereign? If the crawling worms be infinitely obliged for their being, what shall be said of man, created with so noble a being, in so noble a condition? Was it possible he could ever have loved, feared, praised him enough? Was it possible a creature, thus dealt with, could rebel? Yet strange! when this dreadful prodigy did enter the creation; O astonishing rebellion! monstrous ingratitude! from thenceforth, what could be expected, but that

pure vengeance, like an overflowing flood, should destroy head and tail, root and branch, with an eternal destruction? Could any mercy have been expected from heaven to earth, when earth had denounced open enmity against heaven? What shouldst thou have done, dread Sovereign of all things, with base, monstrous and ingrate mankind, but make it wholly the butt of thy unmixed wrath? What are ever so many worlds of men and angels to thee, that thou shouldst spare them, if once they dare to utter one word against thee? Shouldst thou reduce to nothing what thou hast created, what hast thou lost, since thou couldst produce, in this very moment, millions of millions of worlds? Yea, and if produced, what are they, but as so many millions of shadows and nothings before thee? O the condescension! the sweetness of thy nature! O the boundless nature of thy grace! 'O the height, the depth, the length, the breadth of thy unsearchable ways!' hast thou become friends with man again? entered into a treaty of peace and reconciliation with him? held out the golden sceptre, as a manifestation of the thoughts of boundless love, that flamed in thy heart from all eternity? erecting a glorious throne of free, altogether free grace, upon the horrid apostasy and rebellion of ungrateful man? Who could have imagined such a dispensation as this? Were you expecting this, ye glorious angels, when ye beheld man backslide so monstrously? Were you thinking so prodigious ingratitude would come to this? Were you not amazed at such a second covenant, after the breaking of the first? Yea, are we not all in the same admiring frame? O eternity! thou art not sufficient to make the impression old, which God hath enstamped on the minds of men and angels.

The

The objects are wonderful! Our faculties are wonderfully elevated! what wonder, my heart is fixed? O this frame of spirit! I see, I see that a world of altogether free grace was the only design of eternity! even that heaven should be filled for ever with a song, 'To him that sitteth on the throne, ' and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.' Lord, what hast thou done? Not only hast thou become friends with man again; not only hast thou made him thine everlasting minion, but thou hast also personally assumed his nature, that thou mightest draw him nearer to thyself, and manifest thy glory unto him, in a more familiar, intimate, sweet and wonderful way, than was possible in the first dispensation! Wonderful! did man cast off the image of his Maker? and did his Maker take upon him man's image, to restore all again? Didst thou, O my God, assume personally our nature, even in its lowest estate, that thou mightest weep, and sigh, and groan, and sorrow, and die for undone man? Is not this love indeed! man had destroyed himself, but did our excellent Wellbeloved step in betwixt eternal wrath, and the miserable sinner, and all the billows of divine vengeance did he receive, till divine fury was pacified! No sorrow, no shame, no pain could terrify him: infinite love is invincible. I will not spare base man, said offended Majesty, in the day he rebels against me, as I have said, he must die the death; for the word hath gone out of my mouth. Be it so, saith the Son of God, here am I, a man ready to suffer all sorrow, grief, and pain of soul and body, unto the very death: hath man sinned? man shall bear the punishment. I, even I will die the death; 'sacrifice and offerings thou wilt not accept; but a body thou hast given me.' I will bear their grief; I will carry their

their sorrows. My Father, I am glad thou lay upon me the iniquity of them all; they are thine and mine from eternity: this was our transaction before all ages, that in the fulness of time, I should lay down my life for these thou hast given me out of the world; 'Therefore thou, O Father, dost love me, because I lay down my life for my sheep.'

23. *The relations betwixt God and us are everlasting amazement.*

Who can search into the depths of thy boundless love? Thou hast 'delivered us from going down into the pit; thou hast found a ransom:' this is a display of infinite wisdom, the eternal wonder of men and angels! verily, thy loves are incomprehensible, matchless, boundless, and unchangeable; which, though we sometimes doubted, in the days of our absence, yet all are now evident, as the noon-day light; past, present, and to come, present themselves for ever. O then, my happiness overflows its banks! am not I overjoyed, as at the first entry? how familiarly and sweetly do I converse with thee, O excellent Wellbeloved? myriads of ages appear not a moment in thy presence. This dispensation is an eternal wonder! would not this have been thought a horrid petition, before the promulgation of the gospel? 'O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother? when I should find the without, I would kiss thee: his left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me. I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me.' Indeed our dignity before our fall was high and glorious: but, O this dispensation of love! Sirs, is not God our Brother, our Husband, our Redeemer, our only Wellbeloved? O our happiness! what shall we do throughout eternity but wonder? 'God manifested in

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‘ the flesh,’ O strange! Lord God Almighty, what couldst thou do more to creatures?

24. *Men and angels run themselves in an eternal circle of beholding and admiring God visibly manifested.*

Shall I not behold and admire, admire and behold, and flame and love, while this immortal Being remains? The veil is drawn aside, and we behold clearly the man, Christ Jesus, filled with the Godhead! Indeed the earth is full of a divine glory, the heavens also in a more especial manner, saints and angels wonderfully and eminently; yet all in measure: but glory dwells in this man above all measure! he is God equal with the Father! no nearness to the Fountain of all glory, unto that nearness of the human nature of our Wellbeloved with the Godhead! O then the emanations of thy inexhaustible fulness! even thy glory, beauty and sweetness, shall overflow their banks for ever and ever! we are ever filled and over-filled with thy fulness; yet there still remains as much behind. Infinite worlds of men and angels couldst thou satiate, and make to run over with thine overcoming love and sweetness. ‘Upon whom’ may, and ‘doth not thy light shine?’ Thou art the Sun, we are the stars: what should we be, didst thou draw in thy glory? where-ever thy glory is peculiarly manifested, there is heaven: Let me be any where, so be thou shine upon me. They have the sunny side of the world, who behold thy face in righteousness: a world of all creature beauties and delights, is a hell without thee; I should count them a mass of deformity, should they for one minute stand in betwixt me and thy ravishing countenance. None but JEHOVAH and the Lamb! Had I had this sight but for one moment on earth, would I in the least have

have regarded the glistering vanities of time? 'In thy light I see light;' every thing appears as it is: they are enlightened to the full, who dwell under the beams of thy ravishing countenance. Blessed ones, what must he be, whose glory and beauty, darting in upon us, doth beautify us all! What were we, if this fair One were not amongst us? By thy darting upon me, I am partaker of the divine nature, even transformed from glory to glory. O thy attractive, lovely emanations! I cannot, will not, but follow thee, whithersoever thou goest, tho' without the borders of this great all, or through the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; these then should be no more what they are, but worlds of joy and delights. O thy glory, thy glory, thy glory! cursed monsters, who are under eternal vengeance, for your hatred to his excellency, had you a glimpse of this transcendent glory, should not your misery and torment be quite forgotten? But ye are banished from his presence and glory; and therefore you are inutterably miserable. O my happiness! 'Is it not good to be here?' wonderful! was I ever loath to come here? My Lord is here, are not 'then all things here?' Was I ever loath to come here, because silly harmless death did stand in the way? But what is it to pass through ten thousand black deaths, ten thousand ages of all imaginable torment? One hour here, will do more than make up all. O massy, real, substantial, enduring glory! am I not happy, eternally happy! happiness is here in its full bloom and verdure: I have thee in my arms, O Wellbeloved, and is it possible I can be more blessed?

25. *The glorified only capable of understanding glory fully, mortality can conceive little.*

By thy blood, and only by thy blood, have we entered

entered these oceans of unspeakable happiness; through thee have we such full access to the Father; thou art 'our wisdom, our righteousness,' all things. O perfect security for ever and ever! what wonder this could not enter the minds of mortals? This is only to be conceived by manly capacities. Before, we resembled thee in part, because we saw thee by faith, as through the glass of thy word, but in part: now we are capacious; now thou shinest upon us in full splendor; whereby thine image is fully impressed upon us; we know thee 'face to face, as thou art,' without the benefit of interposing creatures, and ideas, extracted from other things. O immediate vision of God! O clear discoveries of infinite perfections! I see, I see the infinite One 'face to face, as I am 'seen, and my life is preserved.' I am fully satiated, ravished, overcome with thy lovely image! what wonder I am like thee, who partake of thy nature, the beams of thy excellency every where darting upon me! O this illumination! O the high, high pitch of glory! O the everlasting smiles of my Lord's countenance! O the manifestations of more and more throughout eternity! all the enjoyments of eternity are as one moment: all ages are as swallowed up in the infinite depths of boundless excellencies. Creature-enjoyments are empty, and may be received, but infinite love ravisheth throughout eternity: when more ages are past than there are atoms in the creation, then shall I be, just as I am now, ever swimming and diving in the depths of thy infinite perfections, and never attaining the furthermost. This is a life! how sweet to dwell under the noon-day beams of thy ravishing countenance? All darkness and ignorance are quite dispelled; every thing is known

known as it is in its own proper essence: here wisdom flourisheth in its highest region: my former attainments are swallowed up, like the light of a candle beside the sun. O this light day of eternity! O eternity, thou art not sufficient, wherein I may delineate what my elevated heart doth conceive! all are inexpressible: mysteries are no mysteries, and yet eternal mysteries! how was I beset with darkness, and could not attain suitable conceptions of thee? how was I vexed with low and unbecoming thoughts of thy all-glorious Majesty? whence deadnes and unfitness of spirit for worshipping thee aright. Now I am enlightened with the full and immediate beams of thy glory: and O how great and precious are my thoughts of thee! O this ravished frame of spirit! how am I all inflamed with divine love? I am rendered divine; therefore I bend to thee with an incessant and eternal propensity: holiness before was in part, now the cope-stone is upon it. How beautiful and comely are we become, through the blood of the Lamb? I see, Wellbeloved, thou canst wash black hell fair and white, till it become a lump of heaven and glory. Sirs, are we not far changed? may not every one of us say, I am not I? Might we not mistake ourselves, was such a thing compatible with glory?

26. *The beholding of God, in his way of subsisting, and outgoings to creatures, is endless ravishment.*

The wonderful mystery of thy being One in essence, yet Three in the way of subsistence, was only to be believed by mortals; and not to be understood demonstratively; but now I behold, with a noon-day evidence, what I believed. Thou art One, in the most simple manner; and yet there are Three, in the blessed Godhead; every one of

which is God ; who are only distinguished by proper ways of subsistence. I believed in the land of darkness, this, as all other mysteries, should be fully manifested in the land of glory: now all, all is accomplished? 'My hope hath not made me ashamed: he hath fulfilled the desire of those that fear him.' O blessed I, for evermore! what a life is this, thus to swim in the oceans of delights! O this enjoyment! O my heavenly Father, first person of this all adorable, eternal, co-essential generation! O thou 'brightness of the Father's glory, and express character of his person'! O Holy Ghost, the eternal conspiration of love betwixt the Father and the Son! O ravishing sights! shall I not behold, with an eternal overcoming delight? What is God? will take an eternity to answer, though we behold thee as thou art ; one view of thy infinitely amiable essence, and way of subsistence, would seal up innumerable worlds of men and angels in everlasting ravishments. Can I express what I behold? Should I write new volumes through millions of ages, until the creation were filled, they should contain nothing to that my heart is filled with: should I write to all eternity new songs of thine immortal praises, should I not be ever a beginning, and never fully begun? O sweet! sweet fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! O my Redeemer, do I not behold thee, 'the brightness of thy Father's glory, the express character of his person,' his efficacy and his wisdom, by which he made all things? 'The Lord possessed thee in the beginning, ere ever the earth was; even then thou wast by him, as one brought up with him, and wast daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;' immortal blessings and praises to thee. O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, art thou

thou not lovely, excellent, full of all delights and sweetness, who hast begotten such a matchless, super-excellent one, as Christ Jesus, our excellent Wellbeloved, our Redeemer, our Head, our Daysman, our all in all! thy substantial image is lovely, O my heavenly Father! O then thy loveliness! Men and angels, you are but as so many painted accidental draughts of God's excellency; but Christ Jesus is the substantial image of God, his very power, efficacy, and excellency, by which he doth all things; his very self. None but Christ! Is he the Father's darling? and is he not ours? Is he his wisdom, joy, and delight? and is he not ours also? O eternal ravishments! God hath given to, and for us, the Son of his everlasting love and delights! sent he not his only Son and heir into a base and inhuman world, that he might save and gather together the sons of his eternal choice? O blessed counsel from eternity, of the glorious Trinity! O happy we! that ever free, free love bowed and condescended so! what could JEHOVAH do more for us, than he hath done? hadst thou any greater gift, than the only Son of thy love? didst thou give thy bosom-delight to be a propitiation for us, the offscourings of all things? Is not this love infinitely transcending all finite capacities? That thou vouchsafedst a being on us, was a great bounty; but more, that thou createdst us after thy lovely divine image; yet more, thou condescendedst to enter into a covenant with us; and yet higher, to be appointed thy everlasting minions! But what shall we think, men and angels, hath he not given unto us the Son of his everlasting delight? This gift can never be enough admired and esteemed: O Almighty JEHOVAH, thou givest like a King! too great a gift indeed for us to receive,

but

but not too great for thee to give. Nothing can be too great for thee; and this was the greatest gift that thou couldst give: hadst thou gifted us ten thousand worlds of beauty, stored with all imaginable paradises of pleasures, with innumerable fair created heavens of sweetness, with infinite legions of men and angels, should they not have been esteemed rich and noble gifts? But all is just nothing to matchless Jesus. It is a shame to lay any thing in the balance with him; one ray of his Godhead would confound all possible created excellencies to nothing. O thy excellency! thy excellency! am I not overjoyed, am I not overjoyed, that I shall extol thee through numberlessages? Ye may hide yourselves, men and angels; for all your beauties and glory, what are you to him? It is astonishing condescension, he admits you to stand beside him! can I but extol thee before innumerable assemblies of men and angels. My heart is fixt, eternally fixt; shall we not, as it were, contend, who shall extol thee most? And saidst thou, Amen, my Wellbeloved, to the blessed, a thousand times blessed bargain of the new covenant? Verily that love which thou manifestedst in the fulness of time, did show the love that flamed in thy heart, before all ages: though thou wast in 'the bosom of the Father,' ever delighting him, and delighting in him; yet didst thou come down to base earth, and conversedst familiarly with silly, sinful, frail man; and wast found to be a man, that thou mightest save him, lost and undone to the uttermost. Men and angels, you are all looking in with astonishment: to behold God personally, clothed with the human nature, is a sight, we can never enough view and admire; the mirror, wherein we behold the love of God

to creatures, in its full splendor. Wast thou never near and intimate enough with us, until thou becamest 'bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh?' until thou becamest one with us, who art one with the Father? 'For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all one: for which cause thou art not ashamed to call us brethren! O essential love! art thou not here manifested transcendently? that sentence was comely in thy mouth, 'Love your enemies.' Hast thou not loved thy mortal enemies to the death? Were we not heirs of wrath, born enemies against thy Highness? but, in despite of our enmity, thou didst love with an everlasting love. Nothing can stand in the way of infinite redeeming love. No matter what I have been, since I am lovely in thy sight: it is wonderful loveliness, to become the object of thy eternal love! and this only will I glory in. The more vile and loathsome I have been, the more doth the loveliness, nobleness, and freeness of thy love appear, which will neither be budded, nor hired. Sovereignty shines forth in all thy actions. 'Who shall give thee? and it shall be recompensed. 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, be glory for ever and ever.' O blessed Spirit of grace, the eternal aspiration of love, and outgoing of the Father and the Son, thou great JEHOVAH, blessed for evermore, how sweet a co-operation hast thou in this glorious work of redemption! this transcendent manifestation of altogether-free grace! how sweet hast thou been unto us, in the days of our pilgrimage? how didst thou convince, convert, enlighten, and comfort? we should have perished in our journey to this goodly land, hadst thou not strengthened us in our inward man. And wast

wast thou so sweet in the days of our sinning? Art thou not now sweet, infinitely more than sweet? O the full, incessant, eternal flowings of the Spirit of love! this south-wind breathes strongly, causing the spices of the higher paradise to exhale a ravishing fragrancy every where: how, in every high-tide, nothing but ravishing perfumes? no winds, but the breathings of the Holy Spirit. O what rivers, oceans, worlds of consolation! one drop of this falling upon the heart, appeared heaven itself; but this is more than heaven! every drop of this boundless ocean of sweetnes, I am entered for ever into, would ravish ten thousand worlds of men and angels. This could not be conceived by mortals, unless in a childish manner; the first-fruits surpassed their apprehensions, and yet had no proportion considerable with the harvest: none can apprehend this, except they be experienced therein; and none can be capable of this experience, but those who are raised to this wonderful pitch of glory. These floods of sweetnes would have undone us, in a moment, had we entered them in our frail mortal estate. O miraculous elevation of glory, which can bear such sweetnes! are we not as so many trophies and monuments of thy transcendant power, in its high victory? much of thine excellency was to be seen in thy kingdom of nature; much more in thy kingdom of grace, but most in this of glory: here shine forth thy infinite excellencies, in their noon-day splendor.

27. *Nothing but rivers, oceans of joy, overflow Emmanuel's land.*

O joy inexpressible, and altogether glorious! now, now I find to the full, by sweet, sweet experience, that 'in thy presence there is fulness of joy'

‘ joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for ever-
‘ more!’ in the days of my pilgrimage, ‘ thou putst
‘ more joy and gladness into my heart, than in
‘ the time when worldly enjoyments abounded in
‘ worldlings:’ then have I been so ravished with
the glimpses of thy countenance, that earthly joys
could take no place; so that I could not but ima-
gine myself in heaven already; thinking that the
vintage had come in place of the first fruits: Now,
O now! I am in thy immediate presence. Thy
sweetness, O thy ravishing sweetness! the floods,
oceans, worlds of eternal ravishing delights trea-
sured up at thy right hand, wherein I am entered
and swim for ever and ever! thy land, O Emma-
uel, overflows with pleasures. Never, never did
I know what joy was, until now. Now I feel,
‘ light hath been sown for the righteous, and joy
‘ for the upright in heart.’ Joy is come to its May-
blooming vigour. O the rivers of pleasures, that
sweetly run through all the faculties of the soul
and body! O the full gales of the Spirit of conso-
lation! am I not almost joy itself? are these the
joys, that were so much spoken, and written of,
on the other side of the water? Surely, earth’s
idiom hath come wonderfully short! thy word was
written to children, and therefore did express all
in a manner suited to childish capacities; but no-
thing low and childish here! O massy, solid, sub-
stantial, enduring joys! O sublime, high, manly
frame! none to the joy of my Lord! heretofore I
was sometimes filled with joy; but now I am en-
tered into joy itself. I live and dwell in joy! no-
thing but joy for evermore! thou hast brought
me into these glorious mansions of glory: how
shall we for ever be glad, and rejoice in thee! ‘ As
‘ the apple-tree among the trees of the wood; so

‘art thou among the assembly of men and angels.’ O surpassing delights, ‘in sitting under thy shadow!’ the sweetness of thy fruits, the fragrancy of thy perfume, no tongue can express! they who come under the covert of thy wings, never desire to remove from thence. Sirs, is not this a life of unmixed joy and sweetness, to sit under the boughs of this Tree of life? Is it not good to be here? ‘Have not the lines fallen unto us in pleasant places? Have we not a goodly heritage?’ and after such a world of woe and tribulation, to enter over head and ears, in these super-abundant joys! O sweet dispensation! first to be afflicted, and then comforted; to weep, and then to rejoice; to run, and then to rest! O high tide of overflowing joys! which hath swallowed up all former griefs and sorrows. The first sight of thy ravishing countenance, O my God, made me, as it were, forget that ever I was on earth! this land hath a sweet-smelling countenance: pain and sadness should be converted here into joy and delight. Here is an eternal spring: ‘For the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.’ Now we have everlasting joys for sorrow, the oil of gladness for the spirit of heaviness. We exceedingly rejoice with Jerusalem, who have loved her; ‘we suck, and satiate ourselves with the breasts of her consolation: we milk and delight ourselves with the abundance of her glory: for the Lord extendeth grace to her, like a river. Our eyes do see this, our hearts do rejoice, and our bones do flourish like an herb. He hath made us an everlasting excellency, a joy of many generations: sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; shout, ye lower

lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation: therefore with joy will I draw water out of the wells of salvation." Cry aloud, and shout, O ye inhabitants of the higher city; let your joys sound throughout the whole creation. O Sirs, is not our lot far changed? Nothing on earth was heard amongst us, but the confused noise of warriors, the sighs and groans of men in an agony. Now the heavens of heavens are filled with the joyful melody of heroic conquerors: we sowed in tears for a moment; and now reap in joy for evermore! 'Thou hast made us glad inconceivably above the days thou hadst afflicted us: thou hast arisen, and thine enemies are scattered, and all thy haters are fled before thee; as smoke is driven away before the wind, so are they evanished before thy terrible presence: but all the righteous are glad, and they rejoice before thee; yea, they exceedingly rejoice.

28. *This land of joys is filled with ruined debtors.*

Glory, glory, glory to the purchaser of this everlasting blessedness! let the crown flourish on his head throughout all ages. O my happiness, who shall ever praise thee! and was I elected before all ages, to be the everlasting beholder, and extoller of thy infinite glory? Hadst thou such wonderful thoughts of love to me, when I was not? Were I in the place of my deserving, should I not have been just now blaspheming thine all-glorious and exalted name? O thy free, free love! O the unsearchable riches of thy grace! who chose abominable me, out of the base and hellish mass of mankind, to be a vessel of glory and honour, in the high hall of glory. Lord, what hast thou

done? O wonderful bargain of the new covenant! O the infinite depths of all wisdom, power and excellency, to be seen in this great salvation! O the contrivance! O the carrying on! O the cope-stone thereof! strange! how hast thou brought me hither? I see thy counsels cannot in the least be frustrate by all the power of creatures. When I was a wretched, lost creature, 'lying in my blood' and no eye pitying me; then didst thou, in thy 'bygoing, cast a look of love on me;' then didst thou say unto me, **Live:** and that time became a time of love. Free love was the rule thou walkedst by; not my deservings, or willingness. Had I been left to my hellish will, I should forever have destroyed myself: but thou sweetly and gently, ere ever I was aware, didst ravish heart and all from me; so that my will could not but stoop to thy overcoming loveliness. When I was following after the monstrous imaginations of my evil heart, debauching my loves and joys on creature-enjoyments, despising the only excellent things, then didst thou discover thy irresistible loveliness unto me: which bowed, transformed, and enamoured all the faculties of my soul; so that I could not but yield, most willingly yield: gently but efficaciously did the influences of thy Spirit work on the powers of my soul; so that I closed with thee on thine own terms, as freely as I had been absolute sovereign of myself; and yet as infallibly as I had been no intellectual agent. Verily thou, thou alone art the absolute Sovereign of all things. O thy wonderful way of working! who can trace thee in all thy proceedings?

29. *The glorified, reflecting on the way to the kingdom, see it to be an inconceivable draught of divine wisdom.*

O piercing joys and sweetnes, that ever I heartily and sincerely received thee, on thy own terms! how well hast thou kept what I have committed unto thee, and presented it spotless and glorious before the Father? Now I behold all thy promises completely accomplished. Thou hast ever held me in thine hand, through all the dangerous wilderness I have overpast; 'Thou hast guided me by 'thy counsel,' and at last 'brought me to glory.' How hath thy strength been seen in weakness? How many temptations have I overcome? How many crosses have I wrestled through? How many floods have I overpast? How many boisterous storms have I set my face against? How have I escaped through all the assaults of the devil, the world, and the flesh? And yet my Lord hath set me fairly above all hazards and difficulties! my feet for ever stand now within the glorious land of Emmanuel's blessed conquest. All the united strength of blessed saints and angels could not have brought me hither. Sirs, shall we not be telling to one another, throughout eternity, what God hath done for us in time? that eternity may be filled with a song to JEHOVAH, and the Lamb. Who should exalt, and love, and fear, and obey, and serve thee, if not we? Didst thou love us from eternity? And shall we not praise thee to eternity. And can we but extol thee? not so much because thou art good to us, as because thou art good in thyself. But, O how is my heart inflamed, to think how thy love from eternity brake forth in time! how didst thou shew forth the acts of thy free sovereign love, in that thou hadst written my name for eternal life! How excellent have all exigencies, and cross dispensations conspired to my welfare? Now I see, 'All things work together

‘gather for the good of those that love thee.’ The saddest, and most cross junctures of providence have been the best: when thou seemedst to be smiting, thou wast healing! when thou appearedst to be destroying, thou wast making up! shall I not for ever declare thy wonderful ways? happy I, who shall ever have eternity before me! thy ways to me in time, are the matter of an eternal song! all exigencies of time did so correspond together, as every one hath proven a step to this inexpressible glory. Free redeeming love hath been written on all the passages of my pilgrimage! and most in the last water; when I began to sink, thou heldest me up in thy arms, thou putst my head in thy bosom, and saidst, “Be of good cheer, my love, thy sins are forgiven thee; fear not, my dove, but rejoice exceedingly; for thy God, thy Head, thy Lord, thy Husband, thy Saviour is here, holding thee in his arms. Have I bought thee so dearly, suffered so many griefs, and woes, and pains; yea, death itself for thee? carried thee through the hazardous wilderness, so circumspectly, and tenderly; and will I let thee perish now? Never fear, my fair one; am I not willing? am I not able? have not I overcome death and hell? I have dried up this river with the soles of my feet; nothing remains for thee to do, but to enter in, and possess.”

30. *The fellowship betwixt Christ and every one of his, as intimate and familiar, as if he had but one,*

And hath not the sound of thy welcome, on this side of the water, an immortal permanency on my heart? The impression is indelible: in my first landing, on the shore of this sweet land, didst not thou run, and fall on my neck, and embrace and kiss me? saying, “Welcome a thousand times, with all my soul, to this purchased possession: O

my

my fair one, it ravisheth my heart to behold thee here! with desire have I desired thine intimate fellowship, and could not rest, till I had brought thee hither, that strong loves might be satiate with full and mutual enjoyment. And now shall these arms be exercised in embracing; we shall for ever be twisted in the nearest connexion of love, and swim in the boundless ocean of delights. 'Hast thou been faithful over a few things? and shall I not make thee ruler over all things? Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, thy love.' Seest thou not the treasures of all joys and blessedness, I have laid up for thee, even for thee, my lovely one? I had not forgotten thee, while I was on earth; and no wonder, since from eternity I loved thee. What are thy thoughts of such great preparations? is not this a ravishing place? how is it stored with all manner of delights, suitable to thy highest capacity? doth not thy sight shew, that thy imaginations of these on earth was nothing? Lo, all this is the fruit of my sufferings and death: and now, how shall I entertain thee, since thou hast come hither? Thou longedst in thy pilgrimage, for the naked and immediate enjoyment of me: and now enjoy me, as thy heart can desire. 'Thou art mine, and I am thine' we eternally 'feed among the lilies.' I will satiate thee with my choicest love-dainties, and fill thee to the full, with my eternal overcoming sweetnes. These victorious brows do I adorn with this massy diadem of glory: with these fair and resplendent robes of righteousness do I array thee, so that all the spectators shall admire thy majesty and glory. Thy excellency on earth was obscured, by the vail of corruption and mortality: now have I removed all thy infirmities, healed all thy diseases, raised up thy faculties un-

to such a wonderful pitch, as that thou art fit for conversing with me face to face.. And didst thou, my delight, desire nothing more than the immediate and full enjoyment of me? didst thou despise the world, in its most smiling condition, in comparison of my matchless excellency; looking on all pains, sufferings and difficulties, for my name's sake, as delightful; making my glory and exaltation thy chief joy and aim? And shall I not deck thee with glorious majesty and honour? This, this is the man, O my friends, whom I have honoured, and will honour; for he is worthy; 'Because he set his love upon me; therefore have I delivered him: I have set him on high, because he hath known my great name.' This is the man, O my Father, who hath been with me, in my temptations, who hath glorified me on earth, and done great things for me; even this is the man, who hath kept the word of my patience; who hath known, that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee; for I gave unto him the words which thou gavest me, and he hath received them; and did know assuredly, that I came out from thee, and believed that thou didst send me. How great a friend was he to me on earth? 'When I was hungry, he gave me meat; when thirsty, he gave me drink; when a stranger, he took me in; when naked, he clothed me; when sick and in prison, he visited me.' Verily, in my eyes he is worthy of eternal glory. Whatever thou hast been, in my sight thou art worthy of eternal glory and renown. Heroically done! thy sufferings and actions for my name's sake, I heartily acknowledge excellent service: receive then these enriching palms of victory into thy valiant hands, as an everlasting sign of thy conquest over the devil, the world,

world, and the flesh: and let thy majestic head be graced with these laurels of triumph, while thine enemies shall for ever lie under thy feet. All that thou beholdest are thine; for they are mine, and I am thine: and now thy happiness superabounds, and overflows its banks. Now do I rest in my love to thee; and thou dost rest in thy love to me; I rejoice over thee; yea, I exceedingly rejoice with singing." How shall we ever dwell in these everlasting love embraces? how shall we be filled with love throughout eternity?

31. *Visible things, a most imperfect representation of invisible.*

O inexpressible ravishments of love! O most holy, sweet and condescending nature of my Well-beloved! Every hour of eternity is like the first hour: thy love is green and blooming through never ending ages. Is not this a sweet life, O inhabitants? this soil overflows with milk and honey. Have we not undergone an advantageous transportation? the outfields of this land wonderfully excel the lower world! Indeed the very earth is full of thy glory: what passing sweet delight have I found in meditating on thy works of the lower world? how did every thing I heard, or saw, shew forth thy eternal power and Godhead? But, O the difference betwixt heaven and earth, could never enter within my conceptions on earth! O glorious world! should we, in the state of mortality, have strained our conceptions to the highest, and imagined all the glory our eyes could then behold, augmented and perfected more stages higher than there are atoms in the creation; yet, would such a world have been a deformed mass to thee. Lower excellency, gradually perfected, will never attain unto that excellency which is essentially of

an higher degree. I thought, in my childhood, that the lower world might somewhat resemble the higher; howbeit, I knew the difference was inconceivable, and that here should be no ebbings or flowings, bloomings or fadings, or what could imply the least privative imperfection: but now I see they have no likenesses to one another, either in whole or in part; even as to the smallest external resemblance. No beauties, no comeliness, no joys, no delights here; if we speak according to earth's dialect; yet, here are all things in an high and eminent manner. O my God, how incomprehensible art thou in thy works? how ravishing in that reflex of thy glory, which shall endure for ever? Thou shalt for ever rejoice in thy works; every work of thine is a depth, a ravishing wonder to my elevated capacity! might not the mediate enjoyment of thee, through thy creatures, render a creature eternally happy? 'How excellent is thy name in all the earth? who hath set thy glory above the heavens.' What wonders are written in those heavens of heavens? the choice masterpiece of thee, 'who art perfect in knowledge, and excellent in working.' This is a world stored with all manner of riches, the inhabitants here inherit all things.

32. *All excellency, spiritual or corporal, on earth, is augmented in glory, by myriads of stages.*

We knew on earth by the word, that when the clay-house 'of our tabernacle should be dissolved,' we were to receive a building of God, 'an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;' for in that we did groan, not desiring to be unclothed, but clothed upon with our house from heaven; 'that mortality might be swallowed up of life.' And now, every one of us, in our own kind, appears

pears the perfection of beauty! whose very clay-tabernacles are now conformed to his glorious body; and whose souls are made perfect in holiness! And did our bodies, when terrestrial, so degrade? how doth the celestial, united to an elevated soul, perfect with wonderful excellency? Did our vile clubbish bodies impede the sublime operations of our heaven-born spirits? how do these glorious bodies perfect perfected souls, in all their outgoings? If, 'when sown in corruption,' they rendered us frail and contemptible, in many things like the beasts; how excellent, glorious, and majestic are we now, when vileness and corruption is swallowed up of glory? Yea, if it might have been said of our souls, when darkened with mortality and finning, they were in their operation quick; what are they now, when exalted to such a supernatural high pitch of excellency? Did we behold, by faith, a ravishing fulness and beauty in thy face; what do we now behold, when made so capacious and divine? Were our bodies, when animal, such stupendous pieces of thy unsearchable wisdom and power, as every one of us was amazed, and said, 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made!' how excellent and curious are these heavenly bodies, 'conformed to the glorious body of the Son of God?' Did our wisdom shine, in our mortal faces? what majesty and glory dwells in every cast of our eye now? Were the potsherds of the earth so vigorous, strong, and valiant, that many of us, through faith, excelled in these perfections, which brutish men were only pleased with, whereby 'we subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight, turn-

‘ ed to flight the armies of the aliens?’ O now, our wonderful strength and vigour, when our very corporal parts become spiritual, and of a divine nature! Had some of us hearts, in our dull earthly condition, ‘enlarged as the sand on the sea-shore?’ how capacious are our hearts now, when widened above the dimensions of many worlds? what is earth to heaven? what is darkness to light? what is childhood to manly estate? O high, high capacity of glory! O superexcellent and only glory in its blooming! O the ravishing frame, that we are for ever in! are we not the self same persons we were on earth? and yet we are not the same! every one of us is like our all-lovely and Wellbeloved! whom we eternally behold, with our bodily eyes, according to our proper measure; every one of us is at the highest pitch of created perfection: this is a wonderful transformation indeed! O sun, sun of the lower world, I can look thee out of countenance, and dazzle thee with every cast of mine eyes! Is this, sometime poor, frail, despicable I! Surely this is I! the self-same I, who was so silly in mine own eyes, and the eyes of all the beholders; wonderful! am not I crushed under such an exceeding weight of glory? But glory, and only glory, can sustain itself. Thy eternal power and Godhead is manifested upon us, in a transcendent manner; thou hast gone beyond, by almost infinite degrees, the limits of nature: the natural world is quite abolished, what now is natural and agreeable to created beings, before was miraculous and naturally impossible.

33. *The highest manifestations of God in time, are but mere emblems of the noon-day manifestation.*

The most signal forte of this glory on earth, was thy transfiguration, O Wellbeloved, in the days

days of thy mortality, on the holy mount, 'when
' thy face shone as the sun, and thy raiment was
' as the light;' so that mortal beholders were a-
mazed, and confounded: such an unsuitableness
there is betwixt mortality and immortality! weak
heads would not be able to bear one draught of
this celestial wine. And was thy face so majestic
and glorious, in the days of thy mortality and sor-
row? is it not more than majestic and beautiful,
now in the days of thy joy and exaltation, when
' thou hast seen all the travel of thy soul, and art
' satisfied?' More loveliness is to be seen in every
view of thy divine countenance, than in infinite
numbers of excellent, beautiful worlds. One sight
of thee, and no more, may set ever so many my-
riads of men and angels in the burning flames of
immortal loves! Much was spoken, in time, of
thy acts, and glory, and majesty; but lo, the
thousand thousandth part hath not been told! in-
deed thou art a Beloved, 'more than another be-
' loved.' All joys, that I ever took thee for my
all and only one! that ever I cried heartily, Amen,
to the blessed bargain of the new covenant, and
renounced my vanities, and came to thee! that
ever I subjected myself to the obedience of all thy
commandments! that ever I preferred a holy, hea-
venly, mortified walking, in time, to the fulfilling
my vain fleshly inclinations! that ever 'I esteemed
' the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the
' pleasures of sin for a season?' Now I clearly be-
hold that 'I have chosen the good part, that shall
' not be taken from me.' O happy I! that ever I
sold all, and bought this matchless pearl of inva-
luable price! O my riches, my riches! since I have
thee, O Wellbeloved, what can I have more?
strange! wast thou despised by base worldlings?

But

But they knew thee not ; thy ravishing loveliness was hid from their blinded eyes ; which, if they had seen, how should the whole race of mankind have run after thee ? Men and angels, all beauty, all loveliness, all excellencies are here to be seen. Much is to be seen in the visible fabric of this great creation ; but no manifestation of glory to this ! who can desire more, than to stand beside thee ? O flower and only beauty of heaven, what are all created heavens ! thou art only heaven thyself. No wonder, Mary Magdalene, you inordinately desired such an armful, as the dead body of this lovely Lord Jesus ; since you knew it was, tho' a lump of clay, the body of the man, who is God, infinitely above the value of innumerable, glorious created heavens. What a sweet armful now, when exalted to such an high pitch of glory ?

34. *The saints are every way like the Wellbeloved; since full love must have full similitude.*

Love desires the nearest similitude and conjunction : as thou becamest like us, assuming our nature, so hast thou made us like thee, both in spirit and body. We are in every part transformed into thy lovely image : whatever before was terrestrial, is now heavenly and divine. These tabernacles were ‘ sown in corruption, dishonour, ‘ and weakness : now they are raised in incorruption, glory, and power. They were sown natural ‘ bodies ; they are raised spiritual : for as once ‘ we bare the image of the earthly Adam, so now ‘ we bear the image of the heavenly.’ O thy vivifying Spirit, that raised thee from the dead ! by whom thou hast made us incapable of any the least change tending to corruption ! And what though it were not so ? here is the Tree of life, whose very leaves are medicines for mortality.

Thou

Thou art the light and life of the higher house, thy sweet, lively influences can make dead clay live eternally. O thy sweet shadow! thy pleasant fruit! thy ravishing perfume, filling all with immortal vivacity! is it possible any can die beside thee, O Fountain of life? What wonder I am so lively, who have the beams of life ever darting upon me? The inhabitants here cannot say, They are sick. Here is perfect security: our iniquities are blotted out, and quite abolished. O excellent life of God, in its perfection! rendering, not only the spirit, but also the body, every vein, every artery, every sinew, active with immortal vigour; for all is filled, and overfilled with joy. O my beloved! thou art excellently termed, the Prince of life, the Resurrection and the life. Verily, thou wast in good earnest when thou criest, 'He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters.' O the power and strength of immortality! we are become mighty, we have the strength of an unicorn; the Lord JEHOVAH is become our strength. We will walk upon the high places of the universe. 'He hath given power to them that were faint, 'and to them who had no might, he increased strength.' What was the strength of clay to heavenly vigour? The disproportion betwixt the excellency of the terrestrial and celestial cannot be told: and no wonder we are so lively and strong, since our earthly part is become heavenly and glorious: flesh and blood is done away, as incompatible with such heavenly majesty. These bodies, though substantially the same, yet are they quite other, as to the qualities, which are heavenly, spiritual, and divine. Naked beings, considered as such, are endowed with no excellency:

it is only by superinduced modifications they are rendered intrinsically more or less excellent, or base. What wonder we are thus? whose essences are clothed over, and perfected, without and within, with superexcellent perfections, merely heavenly and divine. O the comeliness and beauty wherewith soul and body is adorned! O what beauty, when two excellent beauties are united in one! O sweet union! O pleasant ravishing fellowship! In the days of mortality, the consort betwixt them was, in a great part, jarring, and unpleasant; the one did obscure the excellency of the other: but now the soul in the body, is like the sun shining in its proper sphere; or like the light darting through a perspicuous body, adorned with various modifying beauties, whereby the rays are variously perfected, in their modified outgoings: all the properties, perfections, faculties, and actions of soul and body, are modified and perfected by their substantial connection. Indeed, my Lord, we have gained wonderfully by losing our first excellency, which was excellent in itself, glorious and heavenly, in comparison of the sinful condition, into which we precipitated ourselves headlong; but earthly and base, in comparison of this. Who would have imagined that an earthly animal creature, should have been exalted to the state of angels? how silly is man, in an earthly state? how excellent in an heavenly? and all by the power and virtue of the Man, who is infinitely more than a man.

35. *Complete blessedness is the complete enjoyment of God, every way, mediately and immediately.*

We are blessed, and more than blessed, who enjoy thee every way: we drink abundantly, both out of the fountain and streams, at once being satiated

tiated with the reflex and direct emanations of thy eternal sweetnes. Even thou thyself art in an incomprehensible way delighted with the reflections of thy glory, wherewith this beautiful all, but especially thy spouse, is adorned. Art thou not enamoured with thy ravishing image imprinted on her? so that thou criest out, 'Thou hast ravished ' my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one ' chain of thy neck: thou art all fair, my love, there ' is no spot in thee.' The love of complacency ariseth from similitude: O then, shew thy love to us; our love to thee, and one another! we are become altogether fair, by washing ourselves in thy most precious blood. What can be our exercise through eternity, but sweet embracing? O our ravishing sweet entertainments of love, among these refreshing mountains of roses and spices! O what compellations! what love-kisses! O the overcoming perfume of the vast mountains of myrrh, and hills of frankincense! O the smell of his Lebanon-garments! O his fragrant ointments! O his soul-overcoming emanations! every hour here is heaven, and more than heaven. What joy to see Christ, and all his members together, in the royal palace of glory? Are we not all gathered up to these heavenly pastures? and none is wanting. We all longed to be here, fought to be here, prayed to be here, ran to be here, groaned and wept to be here; and behold, we are all here for evermore! We helped and comforted one another in our journey hither; and behold, we are here for evermore! Satan and the world, our corruptions, yea, and oftentimes ourselves, strove to hinder our course hither; and yet we are here for evermore! now we are personally all 'come to

‘ mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and unto an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.’ O sweet converse! O excellent fellowship! O the frame of my heart! O the high motions of joy and love! O eternity! is it possible thou canst prove wearisome? Ten thousand ages seem not one hour! who can set forth the sweetness of thy land, O Emmanuel? Is it not an house, an orchard, a city, a kingdom, a world, a commonwealth of a most comely order? ‘ How good, and how pleasant is it, for them to dwell together in unity?’ It is as the everlasting dwellings of the Spirit, that dwells on these everlasting mountains of Zion; for ‘ here hath the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

36. *Christ is the everlasting king, priest, and prophet of his people.*

Friends of the Bridegroom, are you not overjoyed, because of the Bridegroom’s voice! No wonder it was said of him, ‘ Never man spake like this man.’ How doth he ravish us with his sweet compellations of love? ‘ Our souls fail us not when he speaks; mortality is swallowed up of life.’ Sirs, is not our Wellbeloved and we in these green pastures together? O his ravishing smiles! O his looks of love towards us! O his voice, his voice, I am inflamed! is he not saying, in the boundless joys of his Spirit, ‘ Father, behold me, and the children whom thou hast given me, are for ever in the most intimate fellowship with

one another, here in these highest mansions, which I have prepared, wherein we might be satiated with loves, throughout eternity; according to thy promise, 'I do see the travel of my soul, and am satisfied; for thou hast divided me a spoil with the great, and I divide a portion with the strong; because I poured out my soul unto death.' We all reap the fruits of our groans and tears, afflictions and labours: my chosen are comforted, and I am comforted. All the children of our everlasting love are here, 'beholding my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou dost glorify me with thine own self, even with the glory I had with thee before the world was.' Now the cope-stone is put upon our everlasting contrivance of free redeeming grace: those whom, from eternity we chose for our minions, have I effectually called in to me in time; and caused them willingly and sincerely to cry, Amen, to the bargain of the new covenant; and I have brought them through a world of temptations, snares, afflictions, and all imaginable impediments, into this heaven of everlasting blessedness; as from eternity I loved them, so to eternity will I enjoy them; as I made them sharers of my sufferings and sorrow; so have I made them partakers of my glory and joy: as I have entered into the oceans of boundless joys; so have I made them to enter also. The desires of my soul are fully accomplished: my fair one's joys are full: as their afflictions were my afflictions; their sorrows my sorrows; so their joys are my joys: for 'we are one, and they are one in us, even as we are one: for I have given them the glory which thou hast given me: I in them, and thou in me; whence they are made perfect in one. As thou hast loved me, so do I love them,

and they eternally abide in my love: and Thou hast loved them; for they have loved me,' in despite of all opposition, in a vain world. Behold, my Father, how fair, and beautiful, and lovely, and sweet I have made my spouse! she is all desirable and comely; no spot, no blemish is to be found in her. Offended majesty hath nothing to say, I have redeemed her, I have washed her in my own blood. Here I stand an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek, as a monument that justice is pacified, and all is in sweet terms: as thou lookest upon me with infinite love and delight, and art well pleased with all my sufferings and actings for thy glory, and on her behalf; so art thou well pleased with her. Since of thine own good pleasure, from eternity, thou acceptedst of the bargain, vengeance hath nothing to exact: 'I was wounded for my chosens transgressions, I was bruised for their iniquities;' and in my eyes they are worthy to walk in glorious robes, here with me, before the throne. They kept their garments clean in the midst of a filthy and polluted world; they accounted all the glory and excellency of time, but drofs and dung, unto my glory and exaltation; and looked on all afflictions and difficulties, as easy, for my name's sake; they subjected themselves to the universal obedience of all my commandments: 'They fought the good fight, they finished their course, they kept the faith.' O how heroically have they done, for the crown of life, which for ever adorns their victorious heads! as thou, O Father, 'hast set me down on thy throne, so have I given unto them to sit down on my throne;' for I have glorified and exalted them, as thou hast highly glorified and exalted me: and now we are for ever exalted above all our enemies: thou

thou hast made them our everlasting 'footstool,' 'death and hell are cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' Our joys are full, our glory perfected, our happiness boundless, our praises incessant for ever and ever.

37. *An astonishment, that the high and lofty One should look on creatures.*

Men and angels, are we not all amazed and confounded, with this infinite love of Jesus? What are we to him, that he should cast one look, either of love or hatred, upon us? What are our thoughts? O the wonderful frame of my ravished heart! he loves us, he delights in us, his eyes are fixed upon us, his heart is opened to us, his arms are stretched forth to us, his voice is of us, and to us: who but we! O my Lord, what hast thou done? O love of Jesus! I will extol thee again and again, and for ever I will exalt thy name. Blessed I, who have such a glorious assembly to help me, with an high, eternal note of praise! O this is life! O more than joy! more than happiness! more than full satisfaction!

38. *Earth and heaven quite opposite things.*

Yea, surely they are lovely, who are arrayed with his comeliness; and what doth the spouse want, that the Bridegroom hath to give? O then she is endowed with all possible excellency! this is an assembly of kings, and priests, every one is a noble, magnificent and royal person; all are children to the King of kings, all are princes of the blood-royal of heaven; all are possessors of all things. Here is the flower and perfection of all beauties connected together. This is the company God hath chosen, and with which for ever he will dwell. 'Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, in the mountain of

his

his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of all nations, is mount Zion: how compactly is it built together? It lieth foursquare. No temple here; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, is the temple thereof.' None needs teach another; we are all filled with thy fulness! 'We behold thee, face to face.' No more mediate enjoyment, Shadows have fled away. Now, and never until now, are we lifted up above ordinances: 'Prophesies have failed; tongues have ceased, knowledge hath vanished away: we knew in part, and prophesied in part; but that which is perfect is come, and that which was in part is done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, understood as a child, and thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things; for now I see face to face; but, in my childhood, I saw through a glafs darkly: now I know, even as also I am known.' And what wonder? since our minds are illuminated by the rays of thy transcendent glory. No need of created light, thou art become all and in all unto us. We wonderfully enlighten one another, men and angels; but all is nothing to the infinite light. O the glory of JEHOVAH, which ever shall be admired, and never comprehended! how nearly, and sweetly is it communicated unto us through the Day's-man, Christ Jesu? And how richly is thy city stored, O Emmanuel! here are all manner of things, new and old, which thou hast prepared for thy friends. Were they fools, who forsook all they possessed on earth, to become citizens here? Here is the abundance of all good things, all joys, all delights, all beauties; all are here, in a most eminent and superabundant manner: nothing like imperfection here; no darkness, the

the Sun is ever in his meridian, the light of his countenance is ever lifted up upon us; for ever doth he look upon us, in a sweet, smiling, loving manner; for ‘his anger is turned away, and ‘he comforteth us.’ O joyful, O white, O blessed, O radiant day of endless eternity! ‘This is the ‘day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice ‘and be glad in it:’ even this is the day which hath taken its birth from his infinitely amiable countenance. O these rivers of consolations, that make glad the city of God! O the eternal emanations of all fulness, flowing out from the throne of God, and of the Lamb! no mixture of creature-imperfections, all things proceed immediately from the fountain! O my God, how was I tormented with thirst in the wilderness? I was ever full of wants, and desires; but O now! now I am drunk, ravished, filled and satiated with the eternal overflowings of thy surpassing sweetnes, which run over this vast multitude of men and angels, like a mighty inundation. In the days of our vanity, ‘we sat by the rivers of Babylon, and wept;’ when we thought on the sweet life the inhabitants of this higher house, this higher Jerusalem had, we could not but groan forth, ‘When shall the night be gone, and the shadows evanished? When shall time be out of the way, that I may enter into the ‘pure river of the ‘water of life,’ and satiate myself with all the fulness of God? ‘My soul thirsteth for God, the ‘living God; when shall I come to appear before ‘God? How long shall I dwell in a dry and ‘parched wilderness, wherein there is no water? ‘Wo is me, that I sojourn so long in Mesech; ‘for my days are consumed like smoke, and my ‘bones are burnt as an hearth; by reason of the ‘voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my ‘skin.

‘skin. My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass.’ But O, now is the joyful and white side of providence turned up! my youth is renewed like the eagle’s: I swim in the ocean of life. Who can tell what ravishing solace is under the branches of the Tree of life? Divine vengeance cannot dart through: yet I behold fully thy countenance, O JEHOVAH! we are thy servants, ever serving thee, and beholding thy face; having thy name written on our foreheads. I went mourning to the grave, because of my unfitness for serving thee on earth: but O! now I serve thee in as heavenly and divine a manner, as I would: I am become altogether like thee! I am filled with thy glory and thy beauty: no need to ask, ‘Shew me thy glory;’ thy face incessantly and eternally do I behold, and live.

39. *Nothing in glory, but songs to JEHOVAH and the Lamb.*

‘This is Zion, the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole world:’ this is the city which God hath made, even which he hath made in a peculiar manner. O what glory! O what majesty! O what joy! O what blessedness! “As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts; God hath established it for ever. The Lord our God doth save us this day, as the flock of his people; for we are the stones of a crown lifted up as an ensign upon his land: for how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout, O Israel, be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem: for the Lord thy God, in the midst of thee, is mighty; he hath saved thee, and rejoiceth over thee with joy; he rests in his love, he joyeth over thee with singing; he hath healed our backslidings,

he hath loved us freely; for his anger is turned away, and he comforteth us. He is as the dew unto us, we grow as the lily, and cast forth our roots as Lebanon. He hath made us, and the places round about his holy hill a blessing, and causeth the showers come down in their season; even showers of blessing for evermore. And the tree of the field doth yield her fruit, our land doth yield her increase; and we are safe in our land, and do know the Lord. Behold, he hath brought us from all countries, and gathered us from the coasts of the earth: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he; therefore are we come to; and sing in the height of Zion; and flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock, and of the herd: and our soul is as a watered garden: and we shall not sorrow any more at all: for behold, the Lord hath created a new heaven, and a new earth, and the former is not remembered, nor doth come into mind. Our gates are open continually, they shall not be shut day nor night; for brass we have gold, and for iron we have silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. Violence is no more heard in our land, wasting nor destruction within our borders; but we call our walls salvation, and our gates praise: The sun shall no more go down, neither shall the moon withdraw herself; for the Lord is unto us an everlasting light, and the days of our mourning are ended. We are all righteous, we inherit the land for ever: we are the branch of his planting, the work of his hands, that he may be glorified. Our light doth break forth as the morning, and our health springeth forth speedily: and

our righteousness doth go before us, and the glory of the Lord is our reward. We are saved of the Lord with an everlasting salvation; we shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end. O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things: thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth; for thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat: thou hast brought down the noise of devils and their slaves, as heat in a dry place: thou hast swallowed up death in victory, and wiped away tears from all faces. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, he hath saved us; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation: he extendeth peace to us like a river, and our glory is like a flowing stream. Our heart rejoiceth, our bones flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord is known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies; for he hath punished the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; he hath caused the haughtiness of the proud to cease, he hath laid low the pride of the terrible, and broke the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. Hallelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged all his enemies; and the glory of a-venging justice is for ever displayed. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King; for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he hath beautified the meek with salvation. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion; for he hath strengthened for ever the bars of thy gates, he hath blessed

blessed thy children within thee; he maketh peace within thy borders, and filleth thee with the finest of the wheat: the Lord hath chosen thee for his rest; here will he for ever dwell; for he hath desired it."

40. *The happiness of the saints superabundant, since they have all manner of enjoyments.*

Are we not more than blessed? United happiness hath the greater force. O the sweet fellowship of blessed men and angels! all manner of enjoyments are here! all our natural propensities are fully satisfied, and we are every way filled with God: as our fellowship with him was interrupted, imperfect, and at a distance on earth; so our converse with creatures was of small profit: vanity (as to us) was poured out on all creature-enjoyments; since our faculties were, in a great part, vitiated, was not our fellowship on earth often-times for the worse, as well as for the better? for that our converse favoured strongly of earth, differing little from that of worldlings. But, is not this a wonderful change! We look like an assembly of kings and priests indeed: Are we not all one, in mind, in love, in joy! for we have the mind of Christ. All of us resemble advantageously that perfect, and only pattern of holiness, that infinite world of ravishing beauty, and boundless ocean of overcoming sweetness that only delight, love, satisfaction, wonder, and all, of men and angels. I am like thee, O my Wellbeloved! I am like thee, O joy! superabounding joy! this one thought bears in its bosom, ten thousand heavens. O Sirs, is not his glory, his excellency, his sweetness diffused among us? We are one in Christ; and therefore one among ourselves, being united by the Spirit of love. Thou art the head, we the

members, all treasures of excellency are communicated from thee unto us, as from the root to the branches, which are the same tree. We are one with thee; for both 'he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are one.' Are you not excellent then, O ye angels? were ye not transcendently excellent, and only delightful, O ye excellent ones of the earth, when encompassed about with innumerable infirmities? and are you not now so many masses of excellency and delight? If, when clothed with mortality, you were of sublime and princely spirits; what are you now, when 'mortality is swallowed up of life?' Was our converse sweet in the valley of tears and sorrows? and is it not more than pleasant in this paradise of joys and delights? Was our lamenting our distance from God to one another sweet? what ravishments in our mutual congratulations of these overflowing delights, and happiness, in the immediate presence of JEHOVAH and the Lamb? what a golden life is this? As this full enjoyment of thee, O my God, doth swallow up all other enjoyments; so doth it perfect them also. Until our love to thee was perfected, never did we love one another perfectly. The more thou art loved, the more of thy image. Thou art the centre of all my faculties; all my love to saints and angels terminates in thee; thou hast clothed them with thy loveliness, and they are become lovely: yea, though they were not, yet since they are the objects of thy love; therefore will I love them: but because thou hast loved them, therefore hast thou made them wonderfully lovely; and therefore how are we all kindled together into an eternal flame! O what a wonderful sympathy! as we suffered in one another's afflictions; so do we rejoice in one another's joy. O this super-

abundant

abundant joy and happiness! since all our joy and happiness, men and angels, are mine; even me they affect; I am as filled with them: the happiness of thousands, and myriads of thousands, are abridged into one happiness. And how discovering is the light of thy glory! I know every one of you in particular, as by name, and what was your lot on earth. When our converse is more joyful, shall not our fellowship now be far more excellent? The faculties are great, the objects are great, and great is eternity, which we have ever before us in our fellowship: we are not confined, as on earth, to days, hours, and years; but shall speak to one another of his infinite excellencies again and again, and more and more, and for ever speak: and what new delights, since earth's childish dialect is done away! Words, sentences, orations, and volumes were as dark shadows, of little or no signification: but O the profound idiom of Emmanuel's country! every word is like a talent, representing more than ten thousand excellent volumes in earth's language. How admirably do mortality and immortality differ in all things! Cry out then his matchless praises; shall we not contend, who shall speak most excellently of his glory? shall we not be for ever recounting his wonderful goodness to us, in time and eternity? O ravishing fellowship with men and angels! O more than ravishing voice of the Son of God! were it not the prerogative of glory, that one enjoyment cannot divert from another, I should for ever shut all my faculties against you, O fellow-creatures; that they might only be filled with Jesus my only Wellbeloved. Whatever I enjoy, still I enjoy thee perfectly and fully: with whomsoever I converse, continually I am with thee. Thou art the beginning,

ginning, middle, and end of all. O the eternal high tides of joys in my heart! nothing can separate me in the least, from this immediate enjoyment of thee. The members are not hindered from receiving influences from the head, because of their mutual commerce among themselves; reflex rays hinder not the direct; the enjoyment of the thing included eminently, hinders not the enjoyment of that which includes. I enjoy thee; and therefore I enjoy all things: and my enjoyment of creatures, is no new enjoyment; but another manner of enjoying of thee; like the beholding the light of the sun darting from the moon; every one of us reflects the beauty wherewith thou adornest us.

41. *All the attributes of God contribute to our eternal blessedness, but his unchangeableness is the crown of all.*

How do all smile with a ravishing countenance, whether we view in time on earth, these present enjoyments, or their flourishing throughout eternity? the consideration of God's wonderful providences in time, will fill the thoughts with endless admiration. And am I not ravished in looking back into infinite perfections, before all ages? Here there is ever a further; but it is according to finite conception, to look upon thee, as past, present, and to come. Thou art eminently all things, yet not formally, and in their own proper nature: we change every moment, and have still new actings, because we are finite beings; but with thee there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. Whatever thou dost, from eternity thou dost it; thy actings have neither beginning, middle, nor ending; which are but one simple act, the same with thyself, though virtually and equivalently it contains

contains in its bosom innumerable actions; even as thy eternal existence, innumerable days, years and ages. Who can admire enough thy simplicity? All thy excellencies are but one excellency, equivalent unto infinite worlds of excellencies. O what a blessed life have we, men and angels, in dwelling in God, the almighty, all sufficient JEHOVAH! in whom is contained infinite varieties of all joys, all pleasures, all sweetnes, all contentment, all beauties, all glories, in a transcendent, eminent, and most perfect manner. O happy I! who have such an infinite One, boundless One, in all perfections, to be my portion! O thou art infinite, eternal, unchangeable, in thy wisdom, power, holines, justice, goodness and truth. Everlasting ravishments! he, who loveth us, is unchangeable; he, in whom we trust, is the Rock of ages, whose goings forth have been from eternity. O then! thy smiles are everlasting. Our happiness is eternal; it is joy upon joy, to consider, this life can have no period: it hath neither middle, progress, nor ending; but shall ever be a beginning, and shall be ever, ever alike far from the period of my joys and happiness; ever in this same ravished unspeakable frame of divine love and joy, I am just now into! Shall it ever be high tide? O more than happiness! it overflows its banks: it is much I bear this joy! O my joys! my joys, you are of an immortal duration! O my excellent Wellbeloved, now hast thou with eternity crowned all my happiness! to think ever to be disjoined from thee, would imbitter all the present sweetnes: the greater the enjoyment, the greater the loss. Temporary enjoyments nothing affect me: what will end, will be as if it had not been. Ever so many ages are nothing in the minds

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of elevated creatures: only brutes are taken with time. Nothing is real and substantial, but what is enduring. Nothing vain and empty now: all things here shall be ever in the self-same state we are now in. So are all things in hell also. The fashion of this world shall never pass away: all are now solid and enduring: vanity is for ever banished out of the universe; all things shall be for ever as they are. O my joys! though you were low, yet the thoughts of your eternal permanency may cause you swell over your banks. O glory, glory! how massy art thou? Not a thing glistering now, and anon evanished. O the more enduring substance! the kingdom immoveable: these everlasting arms incircle us eternally! For 'the Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, to all generations. We that trust in the Lord, are like mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abide for ever: the glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; he shall rejoice in all his works. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee: with long life dost thou satisfy them, and shewest them thy salvation. Thou art the strength of their heart, and their portion for ever.' O real, solid, substantial, enduring portion! indeed, thou art the Rock of ages. All the innumerable ages past, present, and to come, do roll upon thee as their foundation. 'Thy years are throughout all generations; of old didst thou lay the foundations of the earth; and the heavens were the work of thine hands; they did perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them waxed old, like a garment; as a vesture thou changedst them, and they were changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.' O my transcendent happiness shall

shall have no end! O life and marrow of joys! I shall be ever with thee, O most lovely Wellbeloved! some transient glimpses of thy loveliness upon my soul, were an heaven upon earth: but O, the permanent and full outgoings of thy beauty, sweetness, and all excellencies, and more than ten thousand heavens of happiness! I am here dwelling within the boundless circle of eternity! O sweet for evermore! only because of my sweetest Wellbeloved, whom I fully and eternally enjoy! what good would my life do unto me, were I not to enjoy him throughout eternal ages? Not, that I account it not an invaluable happiness, to receive one love-kiss, and no more, from thy sweetest mouth: should not its wonderful impression leave a glorious ravishing sweetness, throughout an endless eternity? One sight of thy only excellent beauty, one smell of thy ravishing fragrant garments, one love-smile of thy overcoming lovely face, transcendently excels the height of all creature-enjoyments. Any thing of thee, my matchless One, is of incomparable excellency: thy very frowns are inconceivably sweet, because thine.

42. *That we are altogether Christ's, and not our own; is our only happiness.*

Thy kingdom, O Emmanuel, is an everlasting kingdom; the sceptre of glory dost thou sway to all generations. Indeed, when time and days came to a period, and thou hadst put down all rule, and all authority and power, thou deliveredst up the commission of governing the church, and (in part) bringing the world back to thy Father; and art subject as Days-man betwixt God and creatures, that God may only fill the faculties of men and angels, with his uncreated sweetness: yet, as Daysman, thou art for ever King, Priest, and Prophet

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of thy chosen; the eternal Head of men and angels; ‘the first born among many brethren, having ‘the pre-eminence in all things;’ thou art the great Lord Mediator, the crowned King of Zion, for ever and ever: we are under thee so many crowned kings in Zion; but thou art exalted above all; upon the throne of thy father David dost thou sit; and “of thy kingdom there shall be no end. The Lord hath laid help upon one that is mighty, he hath exalted one chosen out of the people; he hath made him his first born, higher than the kings of the earth: his mercy doth he keep for him, for ever; and his covenant standeth fast with him: his seed also hath he made to endure for ever, and his children, as the days of heaven: all kings fall down before him: all nations serve him. There is an handful of corn in the earth, on the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof doth shake like Lebanon: and they of the city do flourish like the grafts of the earth.” O Plant of Renown, men and angels are as so many branches ingrafted in thee eternally! or else we should in a moment wither; to all eternity we stand in need of a Daysman, we are not able eternally to stand on our own legs: neither are we able to behold God so fully and familiarly, as in the face of Emmanuel, the white and the ruddy! and what amazing dignity, men and angels, for us to reign over all, as co-heirs with this essential Heir of all things? Do I reign with thee, O King of kings? wonderful! thou hast given me ‘power over the nations, and I ‘do rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels ‘of a potter are they broken in shivers;’ even as he received of his Father! What were earthly kingdoms and principalities, but evanishing vapours, night-dreams and vanities? What were the

the heroes of the earth, but bits of half-dead clay, breathing for a few hours, days and years, at the most, and then returned to dust again? No wonder he loaded the basest of men with the greatest portion of thick clay; such a dunghill was a fit portion for dunghill worms: no wonder he gave so little of earth to his chosen; such gifts are below sublime, heavenly and divine spirits. Sirs, have we not been ordained for far better, and more excellent things than earth's silly glory? It was not our Father's will that we should be troubled with many nothings: much clay would have clogged us, in our way. He knew best what was for us, who cut us short of creature-enjoyments. What have we lost, who have received gold for clay, diamonds for common stones, solid satisfaction for vexing vanities, heaven for earth, eternity for time, all things for nothing? All glory to him, that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb. Let the crown eternally flourish on the head of the purchaser of such superabundant happiness. O the great things we have escaped! O the great things we have attained! And were these joys purchased by sorrow? this golden life, by an accursed and cruel death? this glory, by shame and contempt? this rest, by labour and wrestling? this exaltation, by lowliness and submission? O the price, the price! every sight of the man, who is God, would overvalue, and over-buy ten thousand excellent worlds. O my happiness! art thou not of infinite value, tho' thou wert not, in the thousandth part, what thou art? 'What can we render unto the Lord for his wonderful goodness?' what can we, thy eternally insolvent debtors, do but cry aloud thy excellency? And the more we praise thee, the more our obligation

grows upon our hand. O let us ever, in this manner, run ourselves into thy debt. No greater liberty, no higher prerogative, than to be eternally obliged debtors to thy free grace, redeeming, exalting grace. O then! shall I not praise thee, my Redeemer, my exalter? shall not boundless eternity be filled with thy praises? Is my happiness, life immortal? and shall not my praising be immortal also? O this high, high praising frame! Nothing but ravishing hallelujahs throughout eternity. O Sirs, is not this frame altogether inexpressible, wholly inconceivable?

43. *The manifestations of God, in time, nothing to that of eternity; and that of eternity, nothing to what dwells hidden in himself.*

Even the small breathings of these full gales of the Spirit, that blows strongly in this higher region, falling down upon the land of grace, filled my heart with such surpassing sweetnes, that I could not but cry out, 'Lord, my heart is fixed, my heart is fixed, I will sing praise unto thee.' O let all creatures, in all places of thy dominion, sing forth thy excellencies. Let me behold thy name set on high, and the desires of my soul are accomplished. I am ravished, I am ravished with thy surpassing sweetnes, thy overcoming loveliness! Is not this heaven, even glory come down to grace's region? Or, what can glory be more? But now, now I clearly find these have been but the first fruits; some drops falling off from this boundless ocean; and no wonder little seemed exceeding great to a little child; then I could not be capable of glory, in the perfection and bloom thereof. The ground, sufficient to bear a tree, in its first arising through the earth, would not be able to bear the least branch when it attained its maturity. Yet the remem-

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brance of thy ways to me, in my childhood, is full of pleasing delight. How thou hast brought thy sons to glory, is an eternal wonder. O to think of the wonderful discoveries of thyself to weak mortals! whence thou didst shew, that thou couldst manifest thine excellency by weakness and emptiness. Did I not sometimes, even when a blockish mortal, live rather by sight, than faith? O the strange discoveries of thine infinite beauty! from whence arose high flaming love, then zeal for setting thee on high, far above all. Continually were thy praises in my mouth; I desired that all I thought, spake, or did, might tend to thy glory, 'for whom are all things.' How tormented was I, to see so few on earth, for extolling thee! to see almost all minding their own things, and very few thine. How grieved was I, that my heart was so shallow, and my faculties so unfit for glorifying thee! Therefore did I long to be here, for nothing more than to praise thee aright, before this glorious assembly of men and angels. How oft have I been crying out, O to be an instrument of his superexcellent glory! Let me be eternally confounded, (abstract from sinning,) if thereby his excellency may be manifested. What are all creatures to him? Let him be exalted, let him be praised, though we all should be abased for evermore. O the inexpressible sweetnes my soul finds in praising thee! in the bosom of this divine exercise is contained a great reward. It is both the work and the wages; it is happiness to extol thee; it is only hell not to be for thy glory. O praise him, for ever praise him all his works. It is a light thing that thou alone shouldst praise him, O silly I! O when shall I stand among the innumerable assembly of praisers? and tell, and hear told over thine acts, and

and glory, and wisdom, and infinite excellencies for ever and ever! verily all thy promises are Yea, and Amen, to those who put their trust in thee. Thou hast given unto me all the desires of my heart: now, O now, I am in the land of praises, in the midst of you, O glorious creatures, who for ever sing forth hallelujahs, to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb! it was only the weakness of mortality which caused small stirrings appear high and mighty overflowings. O glory, glory! thou art indeed substantial and massy. Since glory cannot fully delineate thy excellency, I behold thy amiable countenance to the full, O God of glory; and O then the enlargement of my heart! O then the wonderful flames of love! nothing was known, was felt, until now: I have heard some rumour of thee; but now I behold and perceive, that all possible creatures, exalted to the highest pitch of excellency, can never be able to praise thee to the full: even because of this I will praise thee, that thou art infinitely above all praises. Wert thou not infinite, thou shouldst not be the eternal object of my praises; created enjoyments cannot satiate for ever. How am I overjoyed, that thou hast thus fitted me for setting thee on high! how am I lifted up in my capacity, almost infinite degrees above the highest pitch of mortality! Sirs, this is another manner of praising than was to be found within mortality's tents: our songs can only be learned by these who have attained the height of wisdom; even who are 'filled with all the fulness of God.' What are finite things in the way of our conceptions? We are past from the low conceptions of mortals: earth's putrid idiom, in its highest strain, composed and divided by all possible ways, or pourtrayed down in as many books

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as would fill the creation, would not express, in the thousandth part, so much of the excellency of our never enough exalted One, as one sentence of this song of glory. What is expressed by dull sound, or turned out in black and white, is not now worth our notice; yet, had I no other way of expressing thy excellency before men and angels, I should for ever and ever be writing songs of thy matchless praises, that all the beholders might in some measure, conjecture the high thoughts of my heart. Were there oceans of ink greater than ten thousand worlds, and paper and pens conformable thereunto, I should soon exhaust them, in writing new songs of thy matchless praises: and yet the thoughts of my elevated heart should not in the least be diminished; but should be like an eternal fountain, ever inditing new matter, ever sending forth new streams of praises. What wonder? I am filled with thine image; I behold thee face to face, and therefore see more and more of thee to all eternity. Ever, ever shall I have new discoveries: and yet for ever shall I have the same; 'for I behold thee as thou art.' What wonder that we are in such an high praising frame? O blessed ones! who, being framed so capacious, to receive the full emanations of his infinite glory and sweetnes, stand continually in his immediate fellowship. Are we not ravished in praising? It is the only happiness to be thus exercised: the only misery, to have the faculties exercised in other things. There is no monster comparable to a creature careles of thy glory! You abominable prodigies of nature, who will not extol your Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; can words express your desperate state? should you not praise him, eternally praise him? He is the

the Potter, you are the clay; he is the absolute Sovereign, you his eternal dependent vassals: all that you are, and have, is of him: if you are miserable, it is only of yourselves: nothing proceeds from him, but that which is good. He is a pure mass of holiness, excellency, and desirableness. O cursed! O desperate! O astonishing frame! to have the heart hardened against the original of all joys and blessedness. A thousand times happy I, who am thus! thus conformed unto the divine nature. O this sweet, sweet frame of heart! I am altogether inclined to praise: this is the land of praises; the whole assembly resounds with praises. O my blessed ears! which are eternally filled with the melodious raptures of Emmanuel's ravishing world. Can sorrows possibly enter here? All is filled with superabounding joys: every where thy beauty is fully manifested. Let us dive deep, and look, and look again, ever shall we find new matter for love-songs. Doth not a sweet willing constraint lie upon us to praise thee? Inundations of all goodness do flow out from thee, O inexhaustible ocean of all excellency: and must they not incessantly run back to thee again? Yea, who can but extol thee, O all-sufficient JEHOVAH? because thou art essentially beautiful and excellent. What though little of thy goodness were let forth on creatures? the manifestation of thy goodness to creatures adds just nothing to thee: whether thou createst or dost not create one creature, or a world, or millions of worlds, all is the same to thee. Thou art infinitely above the praises, or the blasphemies of creatures: thy glory is unchangeable; before all ages did thine infinite perfections shine forth, in the same infinite splendor; so that in the fulness of time, when it pleased thee to shew

shew forth thy glory, in the production and adorning of finite beings, nothing in the least was added to thy boundless excellency; thy creating was the manifestation of what was from eternity; not the bringing forth of what was not at all; as when the sun should dart forth his light, which before he kept within himself; or a box of precious ointment, when broken, exhales a perfume, which before lay hidden.

And what hast thou manifested on creatures, to that which thou mightst, if so it had pleased thy sovereign will? What is this world existent, but as if a vast ocean should let forth one drop, when it might pour forth millions of millions of showers for ever and ever? What is this handful of creatures, unto these vast numberless armies, eminently contained within the compass of thine infinite power? whence thy dominion over things that are not created is greater, than over things that are: from all eternity hadst thou the sovereign disposition of all possible beings, and they are for ever at thy nod. Hadst thou never determined to create any creature, thy power and sovereignty would ever have shined forth in as full a splendor, in order to these self-same creatures existent, as now it doth: to restrain a being from existing, or to cause it exist, are alike acts of infinite sovereignty. Men and angels, shall we not extol the incomprehensible excellency of our God? What can we contribute even to his declarative glory? Are we any thing, to the infinite armies in the womb of his omnipotency? and yet hath he appointed us the only founders forth of his praises, the only spectators throughout all ages. O how inconceivable are thy ways? hast thou chosen these few out from among innumerable

armies of excellent creatures, contained within the bosom of thine excellency? mightst thou not have numberless worlds of men and angels just now serving thee, and not one of us existing? How is absolute sovereignty, and free grace to be seen every where? Creation is an act of free grace and goodness. O thou whole handy-work of God, how oughtest thou to praise thy sovereign Lord? You sun, moon, and stars, for ever exalt him, who conferred upon you an everlasting being, passing by infinite numbers of others; and only you hath he chosen, as never ending monuments of his transcendent excellency. Thou earth, with thy various beauties, praise thy bountiful Creator, who hath appointed thee an eternal monument of his justice and mercy, passing by innumerable possible ones. O ye glorious and majestic heavens, sing forth the high praises of your Almighty Former; tho' ye are the chief and principal part of this vast all, what are ye to these innumerable possible heavens, which JEHOVAH could produce? Thou whole creation, tho' thou art exact in number, weight and measure, what art thou to what the incomprehensible JEHOVAH can effect? What are you, O all ye creatures? you are infinitely every way within the limits of his infinite power; yea, though it were not so, one blast of his nostrils could confound you to nothing in a moment. Cast down your glory before him, all creatures, acknowledge your eternal Sovereign: shall not eternity resound with his incessant praises? shall not this great all be ever in a rejoicing, praising sound? shall not the earth clap its hands, the heavens leap for joy before him, who hath formed them eternal monuments of his superexcellent glory? this is the only world God hath been please-

ed to make; from eternity to eternity there is no other; neither shall this undergo changes any more: how sweet a favour doth the Almighty smell? pronouncing, that the vicissitudes 'of day and 'night, seed-time and harvest, winter and sum-
mer, shall for ever cease;' and that an eternal spring-tide, an endless summer, an incessant har-
vest shall remain. This is the golden world; all things have a smiling countenance: wickedness shall triumph no more. It was but 'for a mo-
ment they opened their eyes, and behold they 'are not: but the righteous are in everlasting re-
membrance.' Thou lower world, how art thou loosed from that bitter servitude to the filth and off-scorings of all things? being the stage of horrid rebellion against thy great Former; the place where created enjoyments were preferred before that fulness of all sweetness in the all sufficient JEHOVAH. Our eyes behold what we believed, and hoped for: O glorious 'new heavens 'and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness!' are we not now masters of all? through the heir of all things, we inherit all things. All things before were ours in title, now they are ours in full possession; for our minority is expired.

44. *All the promises are in part fulfilled in time, and fully in eternity.*

Your folly is even manifested to yourselves, cursed worldlings, who imagined us fools, who laid our hope and confidence on the great promises of the Almighty: lo, all that ever he promised unto us, he hath performed to the full, and more than to the full. Lo, we inherit heaven and earth, and all things, and 'delight ourselves in abundance of 'peace.' We behold the floods of honey and butter, 'and heap up gold as the dust: yea, the Al-

‘mighty is our defence, and we have plenty of fit-
‘ver:’ our eye is clear, as the noon-day; we shine
forth, and are as the morning: our flesh is fresher
than a child’s, and we return unto the days of our
youth. ‘The Lord is our keeper, the Lord is our
shade, on our right hand: the sun doth not smite
‘by day, nor the moon by night. And the Lord
‘preserveth our going out, and our coming in,
‘from this time forth and for evermore. Behold,
‘we eat, cursed wretches, but ye are hungry: be-
‘hold we drink, but ye are thirsty: behold we re-
‘joice and triumph, but ye sorrow and are a-
‘shamed. Lo, he that sitteth upon the throne,
‘hath made all things new; and the former things
‘shall not come into mind. Behold, a new heaven
‘and a new earth! for the first heaven, and the
‘first earth are passed away; and there is no more
‘sea. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with
‘men, and he doth dwell with us, and we are his
‘people, and he is our God: and he hath wiped
‘away all tears from our eyes:’ and there is no
more death, nor sorrows, nor cries, nor pains, for
‘the former things are passed away.’ Vile wretches,
though your everlasting dungeon be situate
within the verge of that dunghill you adored here-
tofore; yet shall you never set your head within
this glorious fabric, but shall abide for ever, in
utter darkness: ye possessed the earth for a mo-
ment, and carried yourselves, as if all had been
yours, bearing down the excellent ones of the
earth: but now we have you under our feet for
evermore. Now it is manifest, who were the
true heirs of the earth: now it is clear, who were
really excellent. What think ye now of your
pleasures of sin for a seafon? Have ye not built
your house, as a moth, and a booth that the keep-

er maketh? As drought and heat consume the snow water; so hath the grave consumed you. Your triumphing hath been short, and your joy but for a moment. Though your excellency might seem to mount up to the heavens, and your heads reach unto the clouds; yet are you perished for ever, like your own dung; you are fled away, as a dream, and are not found; all darkness is hid in your secret places, a fire not blown hath consumed you. Your strength is hunger bitten, and destruction is ever at your side, it doth devour the strength of your skin; even the first-born of death doth devour your strength: brimstone is scattered upon your habitation, your root is dried up beneath, and above your strength is cut off: you are driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world: for 'God is jealous, and revengeth, the Lord revengeth, and is furious, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence; yea, the world and all that dwelleth therein: with an overflowing flood doth he make an utter end of the wicked; and darkness doth for ever pursue his enemies. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: he hath fulfilled the desire of them that fear him, he hath heard their cry, and saved them. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee.' Thou hast delivered us from our enemies. We have fled unto thee, and under the shadow of thy wings we ever rejoice. 'Thou hast led us unto to the land of uprightness;' and as for the head of those that compassed us about, the mischief of their own lips hath covered them; burning coals have fallen upon them, they are cast into the fire, into

into deep pits, that they rise not again. But the righteous give thanks unto thee; the upright for ever dwell in thy presence: many a time have the wicked afflicted us from our youth, yet have they not prevailed: but all that hated us are confounded, and turned back, and are as the grass on the house tops, that withereth before it be grown up. When the wicked did spring as the grass, and all the workers of iniquity did flourish, it was that they might be destroyed for ever. The Lord is a sun and shield; he hath given grace and glory; no good thing hath he with-holden from those that walked uprightly. Blessed is the man that trusted in thee! we trusted in thee, and were delivered, for thou hast considered our trouble, thou hast known our soul in adversity, and hast not shut us up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set our feet in a large place. We were in trouble, our eye was consumed with grief; yea, our soul and our belly: our strength failed, because of our iniquity, and our bones were consumed: we were a reproach to our enemies, a derision to a fanatic world. But we trusted in thee, O Lord, we said, Thou art our God; and lo, thou hast delivered us for ever, from the hand of all our enemies; thou hast made thy face to shine, in its full splendor, eternally upon us; thou hast saved us, for thy mercy's sake. O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast wrought for them that trusted in thee, before the sons of men! O love the Lord, all ye his saints; for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plenteously rewardeth the proud doer: his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us, all the days of our life, and

and we will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

45. *All the attributes of JEHOVAH, especially his justice and sovereignty, are seen evidently in the damnation of the wicked.*

All joys! how doth the glory of mercy and spotless justice shine forth before the eyes of all? within the limits of time, some small forerunners there were, of what we now most evidently behold. How didst thou drown almost a whole generation, for their iniquity? How didst thou make thine earth to devour and swallow up thy rebellious blasphemers? Yea, in all ages thou broughtest down signal strokes of thy displeasure on a vile world; burning up their cities, destroying their fields, and making their cursed carcases to be like dung upon the earth: so that thy most impious enemies could not but say, 'Verily there is a God 'that judgeth in the earth.' And every stroke of thy vengeance was mercy to thy chosen; for, how often hast thou compelled thy sworn enemies to come bending unto thy people? Such were small skirmishes, and partial victories over parties of thy foes. Since earth, by thine appointment, was the place where every one was to act his part, in order to eternity; and the wicked to fill up their cup of wrath against this eternal day of wrath; is not hell a part of our heaven? is not the displaying of the banner of justice, matter of eternal exaltation? By the horrid rebellion of wicked men and devils, thou appearedst to be robbed of that honour and glory, due to thee, from all thy creatures. How doth thy excellency for ever break out from under the clouds which seemed to darken it heretofore? Thy vile enemies, through thy long-suffering, did pass on in their rebellion, some time

time unpunished; nay, in their abominable ways, through thy wonderful providence, they prospered, they lived, they became old; yea, were mighty in power: 'Their seed was established in their sight, and their offspring before their eyes: their houses were safe from fear, neither was the rod of God upon them; they spent their days in wealth, and in a moment went down to the grave. Yea, one event happened to all: he destroyed the perfect and the wicked; when the scourge flew suddenly, he did laugh at the trial of the innocent. In the place of judgment wickedness dwelt; yea, there were just men, to whom it happened according to the work of the wicked; again, There were wicked men, unto whom it happened according to the work of the righteous. No man knew either love, or hatred, by all that was before him. The wicked were buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy.' O golden year of jubilee! wherein every thing is reduced to its proper order; every man rewarded according to his work: the most hidden things of darkness are laid open: the innocence of the righteous, and the perverseness of the wicked, are laid open, before all. All things are in a right order now. No more shall be seen exalted folly, or debased wisdom: the histrionic fancies of riches, and titular honours, are quite done away; fools shall no more rule over the wife. Heroic spirits eternally possess the state of princes; and slavish spirits are bound in everlasting chains of darkness. How doth the equity of thy proceedings appear? O righteous God! what tho' monstrous reprobates roar out their horrid blasphemies against thy spotless holiness? 'Thou art of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity;' and wilt not

not at all acquit the guilty. What joy! to behold truth vindicated from all the horrid aspersions of hellish monsters. I am overjoyed, in hearing the everlasting howlings of the haters of the Almighty; what a pleasant melody are they in mine ears? O eternal hallelujahs to JEHOVAH and the Lamb! O sweet, sweet! my heart is satisfied. We committed our cause to thee, who judgest righteously; and behold, thou hast fully pleaded our cause; and shalt make the smoke of their torment for ever and ever to ascend in our sight: 'For righteous art thou, O Lord, and just 'in all thy ways.' Cursed creatures, your consciences tell you the equity of JEHOVAH's ways. Are you not the creatures that banished God out of your thoughts? and it is most equitable that you are banished eternally from the 'presence of 'God, and from the glory of his power;' being given up to a reprobate mind, hardened against your great Former and Preserver: are you not all most worthy of divine vengeance, who hate your Creator, and preferred your base selves before him; who in the midst of his bounty, when he gave you abundance of created enjoyments, contemned and abhorred him? who are so desperately mad against that infinite original of all goodness, that though he should remove from you his just punishments, and restore unto you your former enjoyments; yet you would stand out ungratefully against him? O horrid beyond conception! that which might be known of God was manifested unto you; 'For 'the invisible things of him from the creation of 'the world were clearly seen, being understood 'by the things which were made, even his eter- 'nal power and Godhead: so that you are with- 'out excuse; because that when you knew God,

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you

‘you glorified him not as God, neither were
‘thankful; but became vain in your imaginations,
‘and your foolish heart was darkened; professing
‘yourselves to be wise, ye became fools, and wor-
‘shipped, served and loved the creature, more
‘than the Creator, who is blessed for ever Amen.’

Even your own selves being judges, vile wretches, is not your lot suitable to your abominable nature, which shewed itself, in your way of walking in time? The characters of a Deity were so written on your heart, that it was impossible to cancel them? yet ye sacrilegiously strove to eradicate such noble draughts, written by the finger of God: and banished from your minds the thoughts of his mercies, or judgements: self, and self only was the ultimate centre of all your designs and projects: whence you preferred the enjoyment of creatures, before that of the all-sufficient Creator; esteeming it a more desirable lot, to live eternally in the midst of earthly riches, honours, and pleasures, than in an immediate fellowship with God.

And is it not most just that he remove these enjoyments you basely placed in his room? Your own glory was more sought after by you than his; and should not he confound, and put to shame the nothing beings you adored, and set above him? What should he otherwise do unto you, monstrous wretches! Should he restore the enjoyments which you used against him? Should he cut you off to nothing, who have desired to be his eternal enemies, and would have essential eternity destroyed? Did you not desire to see his cause and people debased? and is it not most just that you be spectacles of shame and vileness, throughout eternity? Would you be above the Most High?

and

and should ye not lie under his feet, while his glory remains? Are you stated enemies against him! and may not your adversary use his power against you, and trade you under his feet, as you would do to him, if your power did answer your monstrous, abominable will? Do you curse him, and want a relenting heart to acknowledge your madness? and are you so dreadfully hardened against him, that ye would despise and blaspheme mercy, even mercy offered unto you? and is it not most just that you continue for ever in that most terrible condition? No wonder your consciences gnaw you so fearfully; you cannot but be dreadfully affrighted at your monstrous selves; God in his equity having so wonderfully sharpened your faculties, as that you are able to understand your own wickedness most clearly and fully. Your wickedness, in time, was in its bud, now it is at its height; the smell of hell was upon you even then, but now you are so many black lumps of death and hell, cast into the lake of fire. You were not afraid to speak irreverently of him; now you directly (O monstrous madness!) curse him to his very face. The sentence is now fully accomplished, 'To him that hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.' Did you hate the lovely image of God? and is it not most just, that the remainders thereof, which you had on earth, be quite abolished? Some loveliness, some excellency you were endowed with, through the Creator's bounty: now you are stript of all, and are nothing but vile lumps of deformity. Your torments on earth might have raised compassion in the hearts of fellow creatures, but now your malice and deformity is so monstrous, that you

cannot become objects of compassion: no, the beholding of the smoke of your torment is a pleasure. 'O my God, 'thou art holy in all thy ways, ' and righteous in all thy works:' thou art not the cause of their everlasting ruin, though they blasphemously ascribe it upon thee. Cursed wretches, who hath turned your hearts against God? hath he turned them against himself? This is repugnant. Or, was he obliged to hinder your rebellion, or to turn your minds again towards him, when you fought against him with all your strength, soul, and mind?

46. *Sovereignty is the first mover of all things.*

How gloriously doth thine absolute sovereignty shine forth in all thy ways? 'Thou art worthy, O ' Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; ' for thou hast created all things, and for thy ' pleasure they are and were created.' Because so it pleased thee, will abundantly answer all questions concerning thy proceedings. Why are we here, such and such by name? 'Because so it pleased thee.' We that are praising thee, might have been thine eternal blasphemers; and those who are cursing thee, might have been thine eternal praisers: but absolute sovereignty would have it otherwise. That all things are thus, is because of thy free will: these creatures might have been in another state; or others in their room, or none at all; if so it had pleased thee. All the external lots, in time, the most contingent things, were eternal draughts of absolute sovereignty. Is not the eternal resound of our endless songs, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee, ' O absolute Sovereign of all things, be the glory ' for ever!' Wicked men and devils have mightily endeavoured to obscure the glory of thy absolute sovereignty,

sovereignty, by ascribing undetermined and absolute sovereignty to intellectual agents, over their actions: stupid madness! are not all things at thy disposal? 'Whatever pleased thee, thou hast done, ' in heaven and on earth: the hearts of men are ' in thine hands, as the rivers of waters, thou ' turnest them whithersoever thou wilt. Thou re- ' movest the mountains, and they know it not;' thou overturnest them in thine anger; thou takest away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth; they grope in the dark without light. Though thou art not the cause of such a monster as sin; yet sin could never have entered within thy creation, without thine infinite counsel; its existence, or non existence, was at thy disposing; for 'thou wilt have mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy; and whom thou wilt thou hardenest.' Hast thou not power over the same lump, O great Potter, to make of it any vessel thou pleasest, either of honour, or of dishonour? Mayst thou not do, in thine own things, what thou wilt? Blasphemous miscreants, your blasphemies redound to his glory; for this were you created, that his absolute sovereignty might be clearly manifested over you, the 'vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction:' and that sovereignty is cast in justice-mould; so that ye most deservedly undergo eternal wrath: he shall have eternal glory over you, O haters of his glory! these beings of yours are so many ever-standing monuments of his ravishing perfections. 'O the depths of the riches, both of ' thy wisdom and knowledge! how unsearchable ' are thy judgments, and thy ways past finding out? ' For who hath known thy mind? or who hath ' been thy counsellor? For of thee, and through ' thee, and to thee are all things.' Here is my heart

heart satisfied, since the disputers of thy ways are eternally confounded. Rore out now your blasphemies, vile creatures; you are indeed in your enemies hand, divine justice hath overtaken you: every billow of vengeance that runs over soul and body, might dash to nothing ten thousand worlds. But he holds you up with one hand, and dashes on with the other; strong influences, for sustaining a being, are ever showered down upon you. Why strive you against him, silly bits of nothings? For 'he gives not account of any of his matters:' far be it from him, that he should do wickedly; for the work of a man is rewarded unto him. For 'he layeth not upon man more than right, ' that he should enter into judgment with him.' Can a creature be more just than God? can a creature be more pure than his Maker? Behold, ' he putteth no trust in his servants, and his angels ' he chargeth with folly: behold, he taketh away, ' and none can hinder. Who may say unto him, ' What dost thou? Can we by searching find out ' God? can we find out the Almighty unto per- ' fection?' Shall creatures shape thee out, accord- ing to their finite conceptions? shall they pre- sume to be able to comprehend thy ways? art thou not altogether wonderful in thy working, O Infinite? What can comprehend infinite excellency, except an infinite understanding? Shall we not be ever diving further and further, and ever a beginning to dive? Wert thou, and thy go- ings out from eternity, comprehensible by us; then wert thou not God, the infinite JEHOVAH? thou dwellest in light, which no man can approach unto; thou art he, whom no man hath seen, or can see. Can we stoop low enough before thy throne? What are beings of yesterday to thee? what are ever

ever so many worlds before thee? Shall empty nothings quarrel at what they cannot comprehend? ' Thy thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are thy ways as our ways. Who hath directed thy Spirit, or being thy counsellor, hath taught thee? Who instructed thee, and taught thee in the path of judgment? Behold, all creatures are before thee as nothing, less than nothing and vanity.' O boundless ocean of all perfections? we are for ever swallowed up in thine infinite fulness. O superabundance of all happiness and joys! O more than perfect satisfaction, in the full accomplishment of all desires! O more than sweetnes, surpassing all sweetnes! O heaven! O glory? how massy, solid, real, substantial, and enduring art thou; O only life! O marrow, flower and vigour of all lives! O life of beholding, praising, rejoicing, wondering! O life of ravishments! O life of living! O life of lives!

47. *A world of free redeeming grace, is the most excellent world possible.*

What speak we, men and angels, of the limits of divine power? what talk we of his manifesting his excellency in one, or many, or innumerable worlds? Is it not manifested to the uttermost? The production of ever so many armies of creatures can add nothing thereto, since the manifestation of God in the flesh is the principal design of eternity; and all other manifestations are in order to this. There stands one among us all, who is the first-born of every creature existent, or possible; here is the man, in whom is visibly to be seen, such glory, majesty, loveliness, sweetnes, compassion, mercy, justice, wisdom, and all treasures of excellency, in such an incomprehensible, transcendent, eminent and superabundant manner,

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as all the beholders are overwhelmed in a sea of delightful ravishments for evermore. Couldst thou, O my God, manifest thyself more clearly, familiarly, sweetly, condescendingly? Away with other worlds, though they were; this is the only one, since my all-lovely Wellbeloved dwells here. Thy beauty, my fair One, darts round about thee, and fills this world with surpassing glory; yea, were this world myriads of myriads of times greater than it is, one ray of thy countenance, one glance of thine eye would enlighten, and adorn it all. What tho' we could view and comprehend at once, thousands of thousands of created paradeses of beauty; one sight of thy God-like visage would swallow up all. Angels, had you such a sweet manifestation of divine beauty in the beginning, as now? Is not our heaven now two heavens? since the effsential image of God standeth here, cloathed with the human nature, as our 'everlasting King, Priest and Prophet, the great 'Lord Mediator of the new covenant,' the boundless treasure of all fulness, out of which we shall all be filled and satiated for evermore. Are we not, as it were, constrained betwixt standing aloof, and drawing near? These who behold thee, what can they think of themselves? Yet, who can see, and take rest until they be folded in thy ravishing embraces? Verily thou art both the shame and glory of creatures; created excellency is exalted in thee, to the highest pitch; and all created excellency is beautified and obscured before thee. This is the Man, men and angels, by whom all things in heaven and in earth do flourish and bloom: this is the Tree of life, the great Vine of glory, into which we are all ingrafted, as so many boughs and twigs: all the glory of his Father's

ther's house hangs upon him; the offspring and the issue, as so many chips and pieces, darting out from him. This is he, in whom we have been ordained to this blessedness from eternity: this is he, who was promised to the people, under the first dispensation of the gospel, who was held forth by types and shadows unto them. This is he, by whom the carnal and beggarly elements of the world were destroyed; the clear, evident gospel-dispensation was brought in; the hand-writing of the law cancelled; the veil betwixt Jew and Gentile was rent asunder; the nations were ingrafted into the old stock of the peculiar people; the abstruse secrets of eternity were opened; the kingdoms were shaken, the princes of the earth were set up, and pulled down; the church was preserved, and flourished, in despite of all the world. This is the Man, who 'wounded the heads over many countries; who trode the wine press alone, and trampled the people in his fury, until all his raiment was stained with blood. This is he, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the almighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace: of the increase of whose government and peace there is no end. This is the Stone cut out without hands,' which smote all the power, strength and might of kingdoms, nations, and languages: and lo, all principalities, and thrones, and powers, and dominions are broken to pieces together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, which the wind hath carried away. And behold, this Stone, which hath smitten to nothing all transitory glory, is become 'exceeding great, and filleth all in all.' This is he, whom nothing could overcome; he entered the lists with death and hell, and gave

them an eternal foil: so that they lie under his feet, and the feet of his chosen, for ever and ever. Could ten thousand deaths overcome him? Were not devils and wicked men fools, who imagined they could bind him with any ties? What would chains greater than many worlds? what would infinite numbers of mountains of brass, be to hold him down, that he rise not again? How did this 'Lion of the tribe of Judah,' rouse himself from the sleep of death, like a mighty man after wine; and make heaven and earth, and all to quake? Who but the 'Standard bearer among ten thousand?' who but the Prince of the kings of the 'earth?' who but the mighty Captain of the Lord's 'hosts,' could have done so valiantly? Thou only hast done heroically, O Wellbeloved. You little heroes of time, your magnanimity and heroic acts evanish here: even though you had done all you did, in your own strength, and not by his: what though you 'subdued kingdoms, wrought 'righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, 'quenched the violence of fire, through weakness became strong, put to flight the armies of 'the aliens?' All these were done through faith in him. Yet what have ye done? Could you have trodden the wine-press alone, and drunk the cup of the wrath of the Almighty, from brim to bottom? Could you have stood in the gap, when infinite, eternal vengeance, like a mighty flood, was rushing in upon rebellious mankind? Who else could have turned back the mighty current of such floods of wrath, and pacified offended Majesty, bringing rebels to stoop, and be received into mercy and favour again? Who else could have given hell such a blow, as it shall never be able to rise; and raised men and angels to such a pitch, as that they shall

shall never fall? Who but he could have led captivity captive, 'and purchased gifts for men, even for the rebellious?' Who else could have opened the gates of this celestial paradise, shut upon base, ingrate man; and exalted him, by thousands of stages, to more glory and excellency, than that from which he fell? Thou art all in all, thou art unrival'd, O Wellbeloved! no more comparisons betwixt thee and creatures. Hide yourselves, and be confounded, all lower excellencies: be ye silent, all creatures, when he begins to speak; cover your faces, all you little glories and beauties, when he doth shew his face; you are nothing, you are vanity, compared to him: he is all things. Verily, 'in him dwells all fulness.' Thou art not, O heaven of heavens, worthy to be a footstool for his glorious feet. Infinite worlds, erected above one another, were low for him to tread upon. What are you, men and angels, that you should thus stand beside him? that you should set your head within that world in which he is pleased to dwell? Did he not wonderfully condescend, that you might excel in glory your original creation? What is our strength and beauty? on whose legs do we stand? are we able, for one moment, to persevere in our integrity without him? should we not all become deformed, and fall a fanning, did he draw into himself what he darts forth? How is this paradise of God planted with goodly trees, blossoming and flourishing with an eternal verdure? But, did they not receive sap and life, and all from this golden branch of the stem of Jesse, how in a moment should their golden blossoms wither, their fruit fall off, their leaves decay, and their root dry up? It is ten heavens of joy, O Wellbeloved, to know that thy love is unchange-

able, and that these who are united to thee by faith in time, and immediate beholders of thee in eternity, shall never be disjoined from thee, but shall ever remain close locked in the arms of eternal love. What are your thoughts, O ye ransomed ones, of this astonishing dispensation? what an inconceivable transport is this to think that any of the cursed stock of mankind should be adopted co-heirs with the essential Heir of all things! 'Of him are we in Christ Jesus, who of 'God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, 'sanctification, redemption,' and all. A thousand times blessed counsel of eternity! that chose us in him 'before the foundation of the world; having 'predestinated us unto the adoption of children 'by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the 'good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the 'glory of his grace; wherein he hath made us 'accepted in the beloved: having made known 'unto us the mystery of his will, according to his 'good pleasure, which he had purposed in him- 'self; that in the dispensation of the fulness of 'time, he might gather together in one all things 'in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which 'are on earth.' It was not thy purpose, dread Sovereign, that any should inherit glory, through their own obedience: a world of working was but for a time, that this of altogether free grace might shine forth more gloriously. Free grace's banner is the only pavilion we should for ever abide under. How greatly did the devil befool himself, in endeavouring to obscure the glory of his Maker, by the rebellion of man? was he not herein an instrument in the hand of the great Sovereign, whereby he made way for his chief and only purpose? what should our blessedness have been, to what now it

Is, if we had wanted thee, O Emmanuel, the 'man of God's right hand, the very breath of our nostrils?' our eternal songs should not have been so melodious; the praises of free redeeming grace should not have been heard here: glory to the Lamb that was slain, and lives for ever, should never have been sung. No worlds to this world! no happiness to this happiness! this is the flower and top of all possible dispensations! here is a confluence of innumerable providences, that shall never be comprehended. 'Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works, which thou hast done; and thy thoughts, which are to us ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee.' How evidently do I now see, that thy love passeth all understanding; that thy ways are innumerable; and thy thoughts unfathomable? Mine eyes are eternally fixed upon thee, O flower of all beauty and loveliness; thou art the centre whereto all desirableness and excellency betakes itself: in beholding thee, I behold all things. Art thou not love, discovered to the full? mercy manifested in its highest perfection? judgment and righteousness visibly in its full splendor? What have we, which is not in thee? and what can creatures want, which is not in thee? Shall we not, O enjoyers, be satiated, beautified, ravished, blessed, for evermore, with that infinite fulness of all excellency which dwells in him? We behold to the full, 'thy glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and of thy fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.' We have received thy testimony, have set to our seal that God is true; that thou whom he sent into the world, speakest the things of God: for 'he giveth not the Spirit by measure unto thee.'

‘thee.’ O how great is the mystery of godliness! ‘God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.’ If this was wonderful in time, is it not ten thousand times more so now, when the bright day of eternity hath broken up? If a sight of this, by faith, was ravishing, am I not now passed all the limits of such motions? O this frame! O glory, glory! thou art massy indeed?

48. *The work of salvation, is a never enough admired draught; and all drawn through the channel of exigencies.*

Immortality, glory, praise, and dominion to the Highest, that ever it pleased him, thus to communicate himself to men and angels; that ever he purposed in himself to give unto us the eternal Son of his delights, as our everlasting Days-man, Redeemer, Husband, Head, Lord, and all things. To have enjoyed thee according to the first dispensation, had been unspeakable happiness; but to be chosen in Christ, is overflowing happiness! O! were we predestinated to be conformed to the image of thy Son, which, in time, was begun, and now is perfected? Any tincture of thee, O Wellbeloved, any perfume of thy garments, is surpassing glorious and excellent. O then, a thousand times blessed I! who am clothed with the robes of thy righteousness, the garments of thy beauty; who am satiated with thy likeness, filled with thy sweetnes, adorned with thy loves-lines, decked with thy ravishing graces. I am like thee! I am like thee! here is all my happiness. This, thy ravishing image, was begun in me, in time; and now thou hast brought it to the high bloom and perfection. What exceeding joys!

joys ! to think how thou hast made me grow up, from my childhood, to this manly constitution ? how hast thou been making me grow up, until thou transplantedst me from thy lower garden of grace, to thy higher paradise of glory ! Once I was a small shrub, scarce discernible from the base thorns and briars that overgrew the earth : but now I am, through thine infinite excellency, a mighty and flourishing cedar in this higher Lebanon. Strange ! how thou hast brought me to this glorious condition ; and still from lesser to greater, until I have arrived at perfection. Is it not most evident, that ‘ the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more until the perfect day ?’ Though our beginning was small, yet our latter end is greatly increased : our beginning was full of ignorance and infirmity ; now our age is clearer than the noon-day. We shine forth as the morning ; thou hast ‘ brought forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day.’ And thus hath been thy way, in all thy proceedings. How small was thy church in the beginning ? how few in number among the numerous multitude of mankind ? Yet, how didst thou increase and multiply her, as the sand in the sea-shore, in despite of devils and wicked men ? And appearedst thou not, O Wellbeloved, as a ‘ small stone cut out without hands ?’ and yet hast become great, and filled all. Thou shewedst thyself, at thy first manifestation in the flesh, unto the sons of men, ‘ in the form of a servant ;’ so that thou wast of no reputation in the eyes of a stupid world, who are only affected with external shews : how didst thou make thy gospel to go through the world, without any earthly pomp or observation ? so that

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the wise men of the world, for a long time, did little notice it ; yet did thy name break forth before all nations : the whole world spake of thy glory. It had been a light thing, that thou shouldest only have ‘ raised up the tribes of Jacob :’ but thy God did also give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mightest be his ‘ salvation unto the ends of the earth.’ When darkness did cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, thou filledst them with thy glory, and madest the place of thy feet glorious ; for the Lord sent the ‘ rod of thy strength out of Zion, and caused thee to rule in the midst of thine enemies ; he made thy people willing in the day of thy power ; and at thy right hand did strike through kings in the day of his wrath ; thou judgedst among the Heathen ; thou filledst the places with the dead bodies ; thou woundedst the heads over many countries.’ How vain hath the judgment of worldlings proven, who despised the seeds of glory, sown in the hearts of the chosen ? they considered not the noon-day brightness succeeding the dawning ; fools ! were only delighted with what filled the external senses : transitory glory was a dying blaze. It is gone, eternally gone ! the bastard’s portion did flourish, and seem to eclipse the children’s for a moment ; because it was then the bastard’s harvest, but the children’s feed-time : because thou wouldest shew, that thou couldst lead thy chosen, in their weak and childish estate into this kingdom, through fighting, and wrestling, and great opposition of all kinds : whereby our eternal song is drawn up higher, in exalting thy wonderful providence, in bringing us to glory. What astonishing things do I behold, concerning my pilgrimage, which then I could

could not perceive! O time, time! thou fillest eternity with admiration. Wonderful! thou broughtest us not hither at the first production of our beings: and was an inch of time a prelude to eternity? did a moments fighting usher in an eternal triumphing? a life of faith, a life of beholding? a small intercourse by letters and love-tokens, an eternal, full and naked enjoyment? O wonderful! O sweet dispensation! O pleasant conspiracy of diverse providences, and all linked together in the most comely order! what an excellent connection between time and eternity? what joy, to be viewing them both at once, and comparing them together? It is wonderful! to consider the difference betwixt the workings of thy Spirit upon me now, and then! was it not the day-star, that arose then in my heart? by which all is now fully illuminated. I am placed under the full rays of thy glory. How is this being of mine filled with thy divine nature? All is perfected! O my elevated faculties! all my accomplishments in time, are so perfected, that they are swallowed up: and so may be said to be done away, as a small drop, by the approach of a vast ocean. What higher happiness, than thus to resemble thee, O fulness of all happiness! O ever flourishing estate of joys! every moment is a golden life, every day is ten thousand heavens of blessedness.

49. *Our blessedness, is one eternal act of marrying, feasting, triumphing, solacing in the bed of love.*

This is the day of our King's Espousals, and the day of the gladness of his heart: this is the day we longed, prayed, sighed, weeped, and wrestled for: and may not every minute obliterate millions of millions of ages of sorrow and tor-

menting labour? This is the day wherein it is ever morn, ever noon-day; but never a declining shade. You sorrows, you griefs, you labours, you cannot enter this thrice blessed day of eternity! it is our marriage-day, the day of the gladness of our hearts. No nights, weeks, months, or ages; all is after the same, eternity is but one day; the day of the great consummation of the match, betwixt our glorious Bridegroom and us. In time we were betrothed unto him, by the mediation of his ambassadors, and there passed love-tokens, as a seal of the willingness of parties; and such were sufficient until the full accomplishment. Now, O now! are we met together, in this majestic marriage-hall of glory, prepared for the solemnizing of this eternal marriage. All are now in the marriage-robcs. Attendants of the Bridegroom, you are majestically arrayed, as it well becomes the ministers of so magnificent a Prince. O! how doth the Father of the Prince, the Bridegroom, appear in his glory and majesty? what wonderful manifestations of JEHOVAH are here? and how is the Bridegroom adorned? O my Head and Husband! how hast thou arrayed thyself in thy royal and gorgeous apparel? thou appearest indeed like a prince in his marriage-day! O but thy raiment is far changed! thou hast casten from thee the base garb of mortality, which in a great part obscured thy matchless glory and loveliness, and hast decked thyself with ravishing divine majesty and loveliness, as with a garment. Thou soughtest and woedst thy bride in a low and contemptible equipage; thou madest it known that thou couldst draw hearts to thee, in the most low and despicable condition: it would not have been so wonderful, if thou hadst allure^d, and gain^{ed}

ed consent, appearing in thy royal and majestic estate. But here is the wonder! yet, no wonder, since lowness, weakness, shame and contempt, cannot but change their nature, and become exaltation, vigour, glory and renown, if once thou assume them. But now, thou art altogether gloriously arrayed, suitable to the person and the day. O the beauty! O the ravishing perfume of thine apparel! all thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces,' whereby they have made thee glad. The very perfume of his raiment is two heavens! what sweetness then, to stand within the place filled with such ravishing fragrancy? But O! to be ever thus, in an eternal act of marrying, espousing, embracing, kissing, and full communications of love, is ten thousand lives of satisfaction, ten thousand worlds of perfect blessedness, all beaten into one mass. Who but Christ, and us! how hath he arrayed us, according to his grandeur and excellency? all is embroidered with gold and gems; every diamond, every ruby, every sapphire transcends by innumerable degrees, the sun of the lower world, shining in his strength. And doth not this great all appear in joyful apparel, as befitting the espousals of so glorious a couple? All things dance, all things sound forth melodiously our wedding-song! what a life is this? ever to be marrying! ever to be at the marriage-feast! ever to be entering the bed of love! this feast is furnished with all delights, it ravishes every moment, and throughout all eternity! O what variety! O what efficacy in every delicate! every one doth for ever satiate; and yet delights are ever renewed! this land is nothing but a table furnished with all abundance of fruits always. All milk, all spices,

all delights, every where superabound eternally. And in what a ravishing manner art thou ever inviting? 'Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved?' drink, and drink again, and for ever drink. This is a day of gladness and rejoicing; this is the day of the accomplishment of all our desires. The pomp of this day is glorious indeed! verily, my God, thou hast made us as happy as can be! this dispensation transcends inconceivably all others! this delight and love is ever blooming and green! O this sweet and delightful bed of love! one sight and smell of it, afar off, is ravishing. How is it all strewed over with ever flourishing and ever blooming roses and lilies? with infinite kinds of odoriferous and beautiful flowers, of infinite virtues? all my faculties are filled, and over-filled with all manner of delights and sweetness! is not this wine of glory, O en-joyers, of wonderful efficacy? who can endure to pull the cup from the mouth? and yet every draught doth satiate to the full. And is it not endowed with all possible virtues? do not its spirits fill all the faculties and powers with an immortal vigour? an unspeakable sweetness, and surpassing joys? great things hast thou prepared, O Well-beloved, far above all our conceptions! what shall be my never-ending exercise, but to be satiated and ravished with thine uncreated sweetness? If my cloising with thee, though absent, was surpassing joyful, how shall I now rejoice, and exult, in solemnizing the bargain, in satiating myself for ever with fully manifested loves, in this bed of love? the wooing time seemed small and inconsiderable; O the marriage is wonderfully glorious and excellent! How little did a base world esteem thy great call? when thou sentest thine ambassa-

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dors to call them unto this everlasting supper; how did they slight such an astonishing dispensation, as a well invented fancy; and turned themselves wholly to their earthly enjoyments, as being the only real things, which affected their brutish minds? Do you not now see your desperate madness, O vile worldlings? is not your apprehension wonderfully changed? did you slight the sweet invitations of the Almighty, to such boundless happiness? Well, you shall never taste it, through all eternity. You have gotten your choice, a momentary enjoyment of earth have you received: this boundless joy you never cared for. If you have done wisely, rejoice therein throughout eternity. O happy I! that ever I gave up my name among the number of thine espoused ones! 'that 'ever thou inclinedst my heart to take thee,' for my Lord, Head and Husband! O blessed choice! a thousand times blessed choice! had I known in time how happy a bargain I had made, should I not have been overjoyed unto the death? and was there such a difficulty, to get the children of men to say, Amen, to such an advantagious bargain? didst thou knock, and knock again, O Wellbeloved; at the doors of our hearts, before we would heartily accept? didst thou argue, beseech, threaten, and weep for a consent? who would have thought but one furious invitation had been enough for all mankind! O blockish mortality! O stupid brutish madness! thou hast not cause here to exalt thyself, O empty self, which didst despise, and overlook, so much, this glorious match: which refusedst these glorious offers? didst thou not play fast and loose with Jesus, as with all others? When he saw he could not prevail with thee, more than others? (all mankind being

being alike in their original,) he put in his hand by the hole of the door, and then caused thy bowels to be moved for him: he filled thine heart, ere ever thou wast aware, with his overcoming love and sweetneſs: thou wast hearing the ſound of this gospel in a dead and natural way, but he breathed upon all thy faculties, and ſaid unto thee, Live; and thou didſt arise from the dead, and didſt hear, and ſee wonders in the gospel, which blind stupid worldlings could never perceive. Had he ſuffered thee to follow thy natural inclinations, thou hadſt marched on, to endless deſtruction, contrary to all his loving invitaſions. Nay, but ſince from eternity he had choſen thee, of his own good pleasure, out of the maſſ of mankind, he could not but manifest his love to thee, in time, in a ſpecial manner; and therefore he paſt from intreaty to ravifhments, and drew thee with ſuch strong cords of love, that thou couldſt not but yield. O my holy One, no creature can reſiſt thy overcoming beauty: when thou darfst forth thy love, all is ſet in a flame; hell and death could not reſiſt thee. Ever haſt thou been drawing ſinners up to heaven after thee, unto this great marriage; and now we are all within the bed of love. Love! nothing but ravifhing love! O what looks of love! nothing but kisses, but eternal embraces! men and angels, is it poſſible that we can be more happy? what can creatures have more? is there any one more ſweet and lovely than the Chief of ten thouſands? can there be any greater and nearer fellowship with him than this? He is our friend, our moſt intimate friend; we ſpeak with him face to face. Nay, he is our brother, near of blood unto us; we will kiss, eternally kiss, and ſhall not be aſhamed. Nay, he is our hufband,

band, one with us, as he is one with the Father, one in nature, spirit, mind, and affections: He is ours, and we are his. O what great communications of love shall we eternally be filled with! Are you not chanting forth marriage songs, O ye angels? are ye not for ever inventing love-songs of your matchless Bridegroom, O ye saints? O thou whole creation of God, art thou not in a smiling exulting posture? And is not all this glory and blessedness the object of your grief and sorrow, vile miscreants? are you gnashing your teeth through torment, and sorrow, and envy, when the whole creation claps its hands, for exceeding joy? Is it not most just? that you are the curse and the derision of all? you judged yourselves unworthy of this boundless happiness, and are you not justly shut out from this joyful marriage-supper of the Lamb? no more crying, Come unto the marriage; all is past and done, nothing to do; all things continue in this very condition in which they are. O now! who but JEHOVAH and the Lamb? who but the Lamb and his spouse? who are now masters of all, who are now the eternal triumphers. Behold, men and angels, behold your King, and Head, and Wellbeloved, in his robes-royal, with such a massy diadem of glory on his majestic head, as would crush in pieces ten thousand myriads of worlds: every ruby of his crown transcends all valuation; the diamonds and pearls for ever dazzle the eyes of the beholders: all the spectators are amazed, and confounded, they sparkle and ray forth beauty and loveliness throughout all generations. Is it possible for you to restrain your eyes, O spectators? must not all your faculties bend thither eternally? who can express the thoughts of his heart? who can tell what

what he clearly beholds? who can enough behold what appears most evident? This is the sight, the only sight! what greater happiness, O Prince of glory, than 'to follow thee whithersoever thou 'goest?' What glory, to run after thy chariot, in this day of thy glory and power? What honour, to bear up thy train, in this thy marriage-day? follow thee! could we but follow thee, tho' it were but through innumerable worlds! never, never shall we be disjoined from thee. O strange world! O wonderful estate! ever to be triumphing! ever to be marrying! ever to be solacing in the paradise of loves! ever to be riding in the chariot of honour! this chariot is of 'the wood of Lebanon, the pillars thereof are of silver, the bottom of gold, the covering of purple; the midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.' Is not this a majestic chariot, which contains such a great company of kings and priests? What a life is this! thus to ride in the chariot with the great King of glory, whose goings forth have been from eternity? is this the honour of the saints? is this the glory we heard, and spake so much of, on earth? is this the accomplishment of my expectations? This is more than ever I could ask, or think; thus to enter in triumph at the gates of this golden city, to walk up and down its golden streets, amongst the border of this 'pure river of living water,' over-shadowed with this delightful Tree of life! O astonishing exaltation! O silly I, art thou not highly exalted? It was much that thou couldst expect this, but more that thou canst bear it. One beam of thine infinite excellency, O my excellent Wellbeloved, hath a wonderful efficacy, which can render dunghill wretches of such

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blime royal spirits, as that they can carry, bravely, the highest exaltation and glory? thou art worthy, O Flower of excellency, thus for ever to ride gloriously, with all thy redeemed ones after thee! thou didst fight and overcome; and shall not all those be crowned with immortal glory and honour, upon whom thou art pleased to cast thy favour? Thou wooedst and foughtst thy bride through labour, and shame, and pain, and sorrow, and death, tho' deformed and vile, flighting all the manifestations of thine infinite love; and shalt thou not deck and beautify her, and be delighted in her eternally? O this sweet, sweet union and communion! O the mutual compellations of vehement and mutual love! nothing but, 'O thy fairness, thy beauty! behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair! behold, thou art fair, my beloved! thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee! thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck! O the fairness of thy love, my sister, my spouse! the most rejoicing liquors, the most refreshing fragrances are nothing comparable thereunto: O thy honied lips! O thy ravishing sweet tongue, passing all rivers of sweetness! O thy Lebanon garments! they smell like a field which the Lord hath blessed. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he feedeth among the lilies. Come, my beloved, let us enter the bed of loves, and eternally satiate ourselves with overcoming delights: O then, I will be satiated with love-kisses and embraces! I will cause thee to drink of all my delicacies: thy left hand shall be eternally under mine head, and thy right hand shall embrace me. I shall be for ever a seal upon thine arm, upon

thine heart.' Strong burning love requires the nearest enjoyment. O what a green and blooming love is this! we are ravished with the love of espousals! throughout eternity, every hour is as the first hour, every enjoyment as the first enjoyment! all is like the lilies, roses, paradise flowers round about us, that laugh and smile, with an immortal verdure! dance, and dance eternally, that whole creation of God; let the manifestations of thy joy be for ever manifested; rejoice, even rejoice for ever, in these wonderful glorious espousals of the Lamb; for upon every part of thee hath its excellency an influence. JEHOVAH had not so admirably adorned thee, O thou heaven of Heavens, were it not for the glory and majesty of these everlasting espousals? would he have adorned thee with such glorious mansions, if it had not been for the glory and delights of his bride? would the 'mountains of myrrh and frankincense' have been filled with such surpassing ravishments, 'all the gardens of love' with such rarities of beauties? Would the walls, the houses, and streets be made so wonderfully excellent and delightful, were it not for the honour and delight of such a glorious couple? Wouldst thou have been renewed after so glorious a manner, O thou lower world, were it not that thy Maker will have all to smile, and appear in a sweet, joyful, and marriage-apparel, in this day of the boundless joys of his heart? O joyful creation of God! O my heart, thou overflowest with ravishments! O flower and excellency of all lives! O highest top of all felicity! O boundless oceans of eternal ravishments!

50. *The full enjoyment of God, consists in the nearest mutual conjunction.*

O blessed self! that rests so sweetly in the arms of thy only Wellbeloved! thy head eternally lies in his bosom: the heat and life arising from his flaming heart, hath a virtue, which would cause death and sorrow to live and be cheerful. Hell and devils, though I were in the midst of you all, I could not fear you, who rest within these invincible arms. You flower and excellency of all creature-beauty and loveliness, you could not allure me, to leave, for one moment, this ravishing repose. This was a counterpoise in all thy difficulties through the valley of tears: the forethoughts of this added strength and courage, in all thy faintings and infirmities: the hope of this sweet rest hath not been in vain. Had I had suitable apprehensions thereof how valiant had I been for the truth upon the earth? how should I ever have contended to the uttermost, for the smallest things of my Wellbeloyed? how should I have raised up against me the tongues and reproaches of the most excellent saints on earth? how should I have been so courageous, and zealous, for his interests, as that I should have proven a man of contention, in the purest times? the threatenings, calumnies and mockings of either friend, or foe, should have been nothing regarded by me: but I should have so behaved, that I should have scarce escaped capital punishment, in the best of times. How should I have acted to admiration? how should I have run and fought, and fought and run, ever with joy unspeakable and glorious? Can there be greater blessedness, than to dwell within these arms of love? My labour, my grief, my sorrow, hath been just nothing: one moment's repose in thy bosom, sweetest Wellbeloved, might swallow up ten thousand ages of all labour, pain and sor-

row. Now I need no more to pray for kisses; and I will also kiss, and be ever drawing sweetness from these blessed lips; for we shall never change this blessed posture. No need to charge any, that my Beloved 'be not provoked to arise, till he please.' I am overjoyed, that all sinning and vanity is done away, which did much separate us asunder! O sweet, sweet! that thou hast made me pleasant and desirable in thine eyes! what can I desire more, than that I be lovely and delightful in the eyes of my Lord the King? Rejoice and be glad in what is thine own: even 're-joice over me with singing, and rest in thy love' towards me. Drink, and drink again of that sweetness, wherewith thou hast filled me: be delighted always with this loveliness of which I am partaker by thy bounty and favour. Let mine eyes for ever ravish thee, for ever dart forth rays of loveliness upon thee; and be satisfied with my breasts, at all times. My blessedness can be no greater; 'Thou art mine, and thy desire is towards me.' Wonder, and be greatly amazed, O all creatures; the eternal One, and yesterday-beings are for ever in the mutual delights of love, in the ravishing solaces of one another! earnestly pry, and pry eternally, men and angels, you shall ever be infinitely removed from the furthermost of this abyss of wonders: who can comprehend this exaltation? who can conceive this condescension? what think you, that God and creatures converse so familiarly together? what think you, that he is our Brother, our Husband, one like us, one with us, one for us, one ravished with our fellowship, for evermore? who can show the thoughts of his ravished heart? who can fully reflect on the astonished apprehensions of his elevated

Exalted mind? Hast thou not shown what infinite power can do? how low infinite love can stoop? how highly infinite bounty can exalt? how wonderfully infinite excellency can make beautiful and excellent? O my faculties! you shall be ever filled with astonishment, ever satiated with his uncreated sweetness! Can I suffer any want in thy bosom, O Fountain of excellency? shall I not be filled, who am set down beside this well of living water, under the boughs of the tree of life, whose delicious fruits are ever falling upon me? I am satiated with thy love, my fair One; some glimpes thereof on earth were ravishing, wonderfully above what the abundance of corn and wine could produce: the report of thine excellency and glory filled the heart with surpassing sweetness: thy ravishing emanations could not be contained within this large land, but had influence upon the lower world, causing many of the inhabitants to be deeply in love with thee, whom they never saw; so that they renounced the love of all things for thee, strove exceedingly to be like thee, and to please thee in all things: fought against all opposition, endeavoured to the uttermost to exalt thy glory, and continued in a longing frame, to behold thee face to face; and so remained faithful unto the death. Thy lovers are never satiated, till they have thee in their arms: the enjoyment of thee afar off is ravishing sweet, and cannot but cause the beholder run with all his might, until he be at thee, even intwined in thine eternal embraces. O my life, my life! O sweet, sweet, sweet for evermore!

51. *The life of glory, is the only life, that over-tops all other lives, and swallows them up.*

All creatures live according to the capacity of their

their being, but no life is equal to that which is divine! the animal life is dead and dark, and without efficacy and beauty; the intellectual is a low and base thing: but this life of glory doth only excel all other excellencies. All other lives are swallowed up here! that which is in part, and imperfect, is done away, by that which is the perfection of excellency. O my lovely One, thou art indeed the Prince of life! thou art the life of all the inhabitants of this majestic city: didst thou withdraw what thou hast communicated, should we not be so many lumps of death and deformity? Thou art my All in all, my fair One! thou art my life, and the vigour of all my joys and desires. That divine life, by which thou eternally livest, thou hast breathed into me; so that I am become inconceivably above a living soul, or an intellectual creature: this noble divine life thou didst communicate unto me, in my dead and sensual condition, but in a small measure, so that it was much obscured by sin and corruption; then being the time of childhood and wrestling: but how hath it grown more and more, until it hath overtopped, and swallowed up all other lives? so that now I am filled with all thy fulness, even thy nature, thine image, thine excellency hast thou fully impressed upon me: so that, as thou art, so am I. O secure estate! Christ is my life; is not then my life eternal? My life lies in the fountain, and shall it not be ever in its vigour and full strength? Other lives are like small drops, separated from the ocean, and may vanish: how soon did animal, rational and intellectual lives fall from their native constitution? Nothing is permanent, which is not divine; nothing everlasting, which lies not immediately without the mixture of creature-imperfections:

perfections: the nearer thee, the safer; the further off from thee, the more dangerous; to be quite cut off from thee, is perfect and only misery. Cursed men and angels have no other influence from the fountain, but that which serves their natural beings, in their natural operations. O Wellbeloved, not only in thee do 'I live, move, ' and have my being,' but thou art my All in all! I am filled with all thy fulness. O my life, my life! do I not live for evermore?

52. *No necessity of creatures in heaven: JEHOVAH is eminently all things:*

All things are swallowed up in thine infinite excellency! created enjoyments are decried; times and days are for ever fled away: all things are immediately subjected to JEHOVAH, even the Son himself. All rule, all authority is put down: no subordinations among creatures; one thing stands not in need of another; every thing would be, as it is, though all other creatures were done away: all flourish by the immediate rays of the Sun of righteousness; God doth maintain all creatures without the concurrence of creatures: no connections of second causes, no dependencies of one creature upon another: nature's world is quite abolished; the conditions of beings are altogether changed: yet, in how sweet an order do all things agree? all are independent; yet all conspire in one: the bond of love betwixt all, is strong and immortal; the mutual aspects of all are pleasant and superabounding, in being supplied every one in their own measure, immediately from the original of all perfections. You creature-beauties, the full emanations of your loveliness and sweetnes are ever darted upon me with delight; yet am I happy to the uttermost, whether I enjoy you

you or, not: time was, when I could not well have wanted you; but now, whether I enjoy you, or not, I am ever the same; being filled and satiated with his eternal sweetnes: you are the ornaments, outfields and pendicles to my great inheritance, and no addition thereunto. And art thou, O my God, become all unto me? The want of all my temporal enjoyments is a gain that cannot be told! how have I been vexed, and wearied, with being occupied about vain, empty, unsatisfying nothings! so that I was glad of a borrowed vision of thee, of a reflex manifestation of thy glory and excellency; while I was so covered over with shadows, that I could neither order right expressions, nor conceptions, because of darkness. How oft have I bemoaned, 'When shall the day dawn, and the shadows fly away, that I may be filled immediately with his glory? This sight of his beauty, this taste of his sweetnes is tormenting, as well as delightful, I cannot rest, until I get full enjoyment: still I would have more and more of God, until I be filled with all his fulness: but oh! I cannot; ten thousand things stand in betwixt me and him, through this earthly and sinful estate; so that I am oft-times so confused and disordered, that I can desire nothing at all: how doth this poor life depend, every moment, on ten thousand things? Here am I diverted, through mortality, by every thing that comes in my way; innumerable creatures having a commanding, diverting influence over me: must I be ever sleeping, eating, drinking, conversing in this and that trifle? must I draw consolations from this and the other, and the third creature; and have a fellowship with my God, by benefit of means and ordinances, which ever have the tincture

ture and favour of imperfection? and are not the conduits oft-times so corrupt, as that they imbitter my enjoyments? and are they not so stopt, as that I am almost dead for want? How am I drawn aside hither and thither; this feeble flesh being apt to receive new impressions, every moment, from every thing that comes in the way? and how vexing are all these enjoyments, though most necessary? what a nauseating round do I run, ever tossing the same stone? That 'which hath been, ' is that which shall be, and there is no new thing 'under the sun. What profit hath a man of all 'his labour?' For though the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, so that new enjoyments are ever required; yet must the same thing be run over, and over again: and what might seem more excellent than, by the serious search and study of things, to have the heart filled with great experience of wisdom and knowledge? yet I perceive, that 'this also is vanity and vexation of spirit; for in much wisdom, is much grief, and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow.' Run fast, O time, and days, that this world may be decried for ever, and God may become All in all. Silly worldlings desire to have these enjoyments eternally; because they know no better; the faculties must be exercised with something, though with vexing vanity. O but I have a sight of the only satisfying object! O to have all these out of the way! were it not thy good pleasure I should continue thus for a time, I could not but die through longing for the immediate vision of God. Scattered streams and drops are become bitter; when shall I enter, body and soul, into the ocean, and be filled, and swallowed up for ever and ever? when shall I receive the di-

rect rays of all excellency from the Sun of righteousness; no clouds intervening throughout eternity?" O Flower of all blessedness! O golden life of all my desires! I am past from the light of the sun, and of the moon; I am past from the necessary help of shadows, and nothings: the Lord JEHOVAH is my only strength, and light, and life, and joy, and song, and all things. Is it not sweet living thus, in the immediate presence of JEHOVAH and the Lamb? O Emmanuel's world, thou art an excellent habitation! how sweetly and commodiously art thou situated directly against the Sun, and original of all light, and life, and joy, and sweetness? Who can but be lively and joyful here? Indeed, this is the smiling world, the rosy and sunny side of the creation. What more can be said of my overflowing happiness, than that I am here for evermore?

53. *Glory is an eternally blooming thing.*

Is not the fountain of life deep? men and angels, is it possible you shall ever draw it dry? nay, is it possible you can draw so much, that less remains behind? yea, what could millions of millions of angels multiplied do here? Not only drink, and for ever drink; but enter in, and you shall be, as so many nothings, swallowed up, as it were, and lost for ever. What infinite springs of sweetnes and consolation lie hid? Dig further and deeper, for ever, and still you shall find new springs: still there remain as many hid as at the first searching. What boundless varieties of joys and sweetnes? Every draught, every tasting may eternally ravish; yet, every moment, every instant is filled with new delights, new ravishments: for what can exhaust infinite delights and sweetnes? We may feel, and taste, and enjoy it, as it is; but can we comprehend

comprehend it, and search it out unto perfection? When we are all filled, the boundless ocean is nothing diminished: and since we are ever drinking, ever drawing in floods of uncreated sweetnes, are not our delights infinitely various, and renewed every moment? tho' it is an enjoyment of the same, after diverse manners, according to its infinite varieties of perfections, which eminently and virtually dwell therein. O then, the various and wonderful conceptions of men and angels! O the evergreen and flourishing communications of ravishing loves, and joys! shall there not be, every moment, a new love-song of praises? shall not infinite perfections, more and more seen, supply for ever with new expressions of the excellency, glory, loveliness, sweetness and kindness of Him that sits upon the throne, and of the Lamb? We are past from augmenting of our knowledge, by borrowed visions; or perfecting it, by striving to know more, and more evidently, and distinctly; all confusion and darkness is done away; error, ignorance, and false conceptions, are no more: we know as we are known, even nakedly, immediately, and face to face; without a prospective representation, or clouds intervening: so that, as to kind, knowledge is perfect; yet, shall we not ever be searching into the unsearchable riches of this bottomless mine, filled with all varieties of silver, gold, gems, diamonds, rubies sapphires, of inconceivable value and excellency? Are we not as so many divines, searching, preaching, discoursing more and more of the transcendent excellency of that fountain of all fulness? do we not, in this ravishing exercise, run over again, in the same round? O then, throughout all eternity our happiness shall ever be increasing. In the very first entry, all super-

abounds, and overflows its banks; so that nothing is wanting, in the least, to perfect happiness, satisfaction and fulness; yet shall these overflowing tides of loves, and joys, and ravishments for ever swell higher and higher; so that the succeeding moments shall be more superabounding than the immediately preceding. O then, the growth and flourishing of ten thousand myriads of ages! and doth not this river increase proportionably to its greatness? O then! after myriads of ages, according to the number of the atoms of the creation, how shall it be augmented above the number of all these atoms, thousands of times multiplied by themselves? So that, to all eternity, we are ever changed from glory to glory, and ever ascend higher and higher, and still the steps become wider and wider; the faculties ever are more and more clear and extended; and the discoveries more and more wonderfully ravishing. This infinite world of all perfections is beheld clearly and immediately as it is: yet, who can comprehend all the beauties, delights, excellencies and infinite perfections, wherewith it is stored? or, who can reach the infinite number of parades, mountains, vallies, rivers? yea, who can reach the ten thousand thousandth part of its immensity? So that eternally we shall follow the Lamb, through new gardens, orchards, parades, mountains, and ever be going directly forward, making greater and greater, and more wonderful discoveries. All the powers and faculties become more and more powerful and vigorous; so that joy, and delight, and love, and ravishment, shall swell more and more in height, and breadth, and length, and depth, throughout eternity. Men and angels, is not our inheritance inconceivably large and fertile,

fertile, rich, beautiful, and delightful? can we among us all so much as reckon over our palaces, cities, paradises, countries, kingdoms and worlds? O what high stretchings of mind! and what further and further stretchings, to let in these boundless inundations of uncreated sweetnes, that overflow incessantly, rapidly and eternally? O my God, this happiness is more than superabounding! who can express, who can conceive, what a life it is, to be received, into the bosom of thine infinite excellencies! to be admitted into the eternal enjoyment of thine incomprehensible Self! O what eternal manifestations of the Godhead, to men and angels, in the face of Christ! what outlettings of new and various influences from the Sun of righteousness! what incessant showers of the dew of our Wellbeloved's youth! what high, full, constant, lively and cherishing gales of the sweet ravishing breath of JEHOVAH! what wonder then, if all the trees of this paradise of glory ascend higher and higher; spread their branches further and further, and increase eternally in their strength, verdure, blooming, and fruitfulness? Poor life, that depends on creature-influences, and creature-enjoyments! neither are they satisfying in themselves; nor can they yield new sweetnes eternally. Was it not the highest of all madness and folly to forsake the eternal Fountain of living waters, and rest on broken cisterns, that can hold no water? O joy of all joys, that ever I rested upon thee, as my only portion! O my happiness! my happiness surpasseth all expression!

54. *Emmanuel's land is altogether of free redeeming grace, yet is it given by way of reward.*

And what is this great assembly of such glorious and majestic creatures, but a number of bound

bound debtors to the free grace, altogether free redeeming grace of JEHOVAH and the Lamb? Are ye not, O blessed creatures, so many monuments of the free and undeserved bounty and love of him, whose love passeth all understanding? Away with deserving and merit! what can creatures do to thee? what can their acting, or suffering for thee, merit at thy hand? If any creature have any thing of its own, or can do any thing of itself, then may it glory in what is its own. If all creatures are not eternally obliged to love, and obey, and serve thee, with all their might and vigour; then let them ask wages for obeying. Yea, is it not an eternal wonder, that thou shouldst make men, or angels, actors, or witnesses of thine infinite glory and excellency? what are all creatures to thee, that thou shouldst open thine eyes upon them? what unspeakable dignity, to be allotted to the lowest piece of service for thee? The more creatures adore, and love, and obey thee, the more they are run into the debt of thy free grace: yea, tho' creatures could deserve, the very active glorifying of thee carries in its bosom full and overrunning recompence. And what proportion imaginable is there betwixt the acting or suffering of a finite creature, and one moment of these boundless joys? the service is finite, but the reward is invaluable. Tho' it had been possible for creatures to persevere under a covenant of works; yet could they not have deserved, or earned wages, except by virtue of paction, a product of wonderfully free, and condescending grace: which way of earning is under this second covenant, and that in a more sublime and glorious manner. Perfect obedience was the condition of the first; sincerity of the second. Continuation of a rational

al life, in an earthly paradise, so long as the creature persevered, was the reward of the first; eternal duration of a divine life, in this celestial paradise, the reward of the second. The first was made with the earthly Adam, as the head, and principal person of the earthly house; the second, with the heavenly Adam, as head and principal person of the heavenly. But the first ruined both himself and his, not being able to fulfil the bargain; the second hath made up both himself, and his, for evermore, by perfect obedience, and full satisfaction, and excellency of power, in transforming his children into his heavenly image, and bringing them all infallibly to glory. The covenant was principally made with our Wellbeloved; all the promises of the new covenant were made to him, as the chief and 'first-born of many brethren;' so that it was impossible, that any of those he had chosen from eternity could be lost; being put into so sure an hand, who was accountable to the Father for every one of them; having from eternity received them from him, as his spouse, his children, his brethren, his co-heirs, his pupils, to be guided and tutored by him, in time and eternity: so that all the stress and care of our salvation was laid upon our great Lord Redeemer's shoulders; according to which trust, he hath called, justified, sanctified us, enabled us to do, kept us from falling away, in the midst of infirmities, difficulties, temptations, and presented us 'without spot or blemish, before his Father.' Our first earthly father played the bankrupt with all, and left us poor, vile, miserable wretches, lying in our blood, without any eye pitying us; our nature being in his loins, as the root and original of us all. Did he not degrade and

and debase us ; so that from excellent rational creatures, created after the ravishing image of our Maker, we became brutish, vain, foolish, and vile ? but in came our Wellbeloved, and assumed our nature, in its low and base condition, with all its infirmities, and passions, yet without sin, and raised it up to a far, far higher pinnacle of excellency, than ever it fell from Before, its excellency was natural, but now it is supernatural ; before earthly, now heavenly and divine. What are our thoughts of the inconceivable rays, and ravishing resplendencies of free, free, free grace, shining from the Godhead, in the face of Christ, to undone creatures ? What could we do for ourselves, when broken and lost ? was not our condition most desperate like ? We could not keep ourselves in our first condition, when entire and in our full vigour ; what then could we do, when broken in pieces and destroyed ? Would we not have been obliged to him, who had restored us to our former estate, or merely saved us from eternal wrath, though he had done no more ? But O ! what astonishing bounty, love, mercy, condescension, compassion, kindness, patience, and infinite wonders shine here ! Sirs, what have we lost by our great and unspeakable loss ? Our fall was abominable, dreadful, monstrous, ungrateful, and astonishing ; yet what have we lost ? Ah, no thanks to us, that we are not eternally undone : utter destruction may be ascribed for ever to us, tho' the guilt thereof is eternally cancelled ; let all the glory and praise rest upon his head, unto whom it doth alone appertain ; even on his glorious and majestic head, who is the author and finisher of this great salvation. We are thine ! we are thine ! O excellent Wellbeloved ; even thine

thine upon all possible accounts ! In our first condition we were thine by creation, thine by covenant, and these were sweet ; but O now ! now we are also thine by redemption, thine by purchase, thine by a better covenant-foundation, a better foundation than by conquest ; thine by a new creation, thine by exaltation to this glorious and divine estate. O sweet, sweet ! we are altogether thine, and in no respect our own ! O boundless joys ! I am eternally tied to thee, by all obligations ! O my inconceivable happiness ! self hath not the least occasion to boast of itself : no creature, man, or angel, hath any thing of which to glory, in thy presence. O thou heaven of heavens, shalt thou not be filled with songs of free redeeming grace ? what should we do with our diadems, our sceptres, our palms, our robes, our glorious ornaments ? what should we do with all that we are and have, but cast them down at the feet of him, who hath created, redeemed, and sanctified us ? even at the feet of him, who 'hath ' redeemed us to God by his own blood, and ' made us to our God kings and priests ; and we ' shall reign for ever and ever.' O excellent ! the less our own, the better ; the more thine, the more blessed condition ! we are altogether thine, all our excellency, all our actings, all our sufferings, all our glory, is only thine. This kingdom thou alone didst purchase, without the help of any : all, all are the product of free, eternally free love ! all is given to us most freely ! from eternity were we chosen to all this blessedness, most absolutely, without respect to foreseen excellency, or deserving. All is most free to us ; but dear to our Wellbeloved ! what couldst thou give more, my dearest Lord, than thy life, thy blood, thy very self ?

self? couldst thou pay a greater price for our salvation, than thy noble, superexcellent, and glorious Self? could love have been manifested in a more transcendent, glorious and excellent way? what couldst thou have done more than thou hast done? Is not this an excellent inheritance, men and angels? is not this land a beautiful, rich, and pleasant land indeed? doth this look like the field of blood? our Emmanuel conquered all this by blood and death: he rode over hell and devils, and vanquished all the opposers of this boundless blessedness: thousands and ten thousands were nothing in his way. He made nations and languages sacrifices to divine justice. 'He rent the heavens, and came down, the mountains flowed down at his presence: he trode down the people in his anger, and made them drunk in his fury; and did bring down their strength to the earth. He gave Egypt for our ransom, Ethiopia and Sebah for us.' Were not these great things? Hath he not redeemed Zion by blood? hath he not made a noble conquest? yea, he slew death itself; he went to the land of death and destruction, and vanquished his strongest, and most cruel enemies, in their own native soil. O wonderful! 'he led captivity captive,' by being led captive! by undergoing shame, and pain, and grief, and ignominy, he procured boundless joys, and delights, and glory, and renown: by dying he vanquished death, and him that had the power thereof. Here, O here is the invaluable price! the life, the life, the blood of God! wonder, and stand in eternal amazement, all creatures! the life of the Lord of life was laid down a ransom for us, as the price of our eternal blessedness! Who can value the life and blood of the man who is God, blessed for

for evermore? shall we speak of ten thousand millions of millions of excellent men, of glorious angels? That is just nothing. Shall we speak of myriads of myriads of worlds, more excellent every one than another? That is just nothing also: so many creatures, so many nothings. Ever so many worlds are so many shadows, in comparison of the enduring substance. O the price, the price! do not the thoughts thereof heighten the conceptions of men and angels beyond all conception? What strange flamings of love! what high motions of joy! what overflowing tides of admiration, at every thought of the wonderful way, wherein God hath done all this to us! all this honour faith, Behold the Son of God put to shame! all this glory faith, Behold eternal, essential glory obscured! and this joyful and flourishing life faith, Behold the Prince of life in a great agony, bleeding to death, even the shameful and painful death of the cross! O highest manifestation of infinite love! all is come through the bowels of our dearest Lord Jesus, whose love to us was so strong, that nothing could in the least quench it: he laboured through love, sorrowed through love, wept through love, he died of love. When cold death began to seize on his heart, he found it all flaming with the love of his dearest spouse; neither could he destroy these immortal flames, which flash and dart forth their overcoming rays, throughout eternity. O thy incomprehensible love! bend hither all your faculties, men and angels, and be amazed for evermore! O my heavenly Father, by thy infinite gift, thou hast lost nothing; the Son of thy everlasting love and delights is ever in thy presence. O my Redeemer, thou lost thy life, yet thou hast not lost it; behold, thou

art alive for evermore. The price of all doth eternally remain, else should the things bought be nothing. Let no creature speak of its excellency, or acts; what can they conquer? what can they purchase? Our Emmanuel hath purchased all things: indeed by birth-right he is the eternal and essential Heir of all; yet hath he added a new right, and made it all his anew by conquest. ' Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thee be all the glory, dominion, and praise,' for ever and ever. Yet, O wonderful bounty, condescension and love! thou hast put on our heads the crowns of conquerors, the laurels of triumph: thou hast put into our hands the never-fading palms of victory: Hast thou done all? and shall we bear the honour of, Well, and heroically done, for the great and massy diadem of glory? Hast thou conquered? and shall we triumph, as purchasers of heaven and all? Hast thou suffered? and shall we enter into this glory, as having undergone all the assaults of hell and death, in our own proper strength? This is a sweeter, more condescending and wonderful dispensation, than if thou hadst brought us immediately out of the state of nature into this state of glory; or created us in the midst of this incomparable happiness. O sweet, sweet! to think, that grace hath ushered in glory; a life of believing, a life of immediate vision; a life of labour and difficulty, this life of eternal repose; a life of shame and reproach, this life of immortal glory and renown; a life of fighting, this life of everlasting triumphing; a life of tears, pain and sadness, this life of boundless joys and delights; a life of fears and weakness, this life of perfect security and might! how wisely hath my Lord connected all things together? that our glory

glory might be more than glory; our happiness, more superabounding happiness. This glory, this incomprehensible glory and renown he will cause to rest for ever upon our heads: worlds of amazement! to hear my Lord say, in the presence of all, to every one, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord:' heroically done, for this massy diadem of glory: 'Worthy art thou to walk with me in white; for thou hast kept clean garments, in the midst of a polluted world; thou hast valiantly fought and overcome; and art thou not worthy to triumph with me, throughout the vast ages of endless eternity? As I have done, so thou hast suffered patiently, even unto the death; and therefore it well becomes thee to enter into this unspeakable glory.' What, Lord! must I, poor silly I, once base, sinful, wretched and undone I, must even I possess this undefiled, incorruptible, never-fading inheritance? What have I done? or, what have I suffered for thy excellent name? yea, what have I not done, endeavoured and desired against thy holiness? Yet, even I must enter here, as worthy of all! I must wear the conqueror's crown! I must bear the palms of victory! even thus it must be, thus it should be, since it is the good pleasure of my Lord the King. When our Bridegroom hath made his spouse the perfection of beauty, how is his mystical body composed of various members, every one endowed with its own proper beauty? Every one is not graced with the same measure of excellency, since every member conduceth to the beautifying of the whole: variety of glories in the same is wonderful, ravishing and pleasant.

pleasant. Even on earth the spouse was adorned with various excellencies, chiefly for beauty, and not for necessity: nay, the heavens and the earth are not defective herein: were every star like the sun, or all the stars of equal glory, or the whole expansion adorned with equal glory; or were every part of the earth covered over with the same beauties, so that nothing did excel another; were all heaven, or all earth; or were earth of equal glory with heaven; or were all a sun; or were the higher and lower world nothing differing in glory; all would be every way the same; and so nothing so beautiful as it is. Indeed, the head is loving to all the members, and is alike affected with them all; yet, every member is in its own order, 'according to his good pleasure, ' which from eternity he purposed in himself.' As he distributed, after diverse degrees and manners, his gifts and graces, to his chosen in time; so doth he make the harvest correspondent to the seed-time, the manly constitution to the infancy, the vigour and blooming to the budding and first springing forth. According to the grace given unto us, in time, and the improvement thereof, in acting, or suffering for his glory; accordingly is every one of us rewarded; as he did promise and testify, that 'every man should receive according to his works; so they that are wise, shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.' The connection betwixt time and eternity here, is not natural, as if from the nature of things, so much grace deserved so much glory; so much, or so long acting, or suffering, such or such a diadem of honour; but merely from his good pleasure, who disposeth all

all things most absolutely and freely. If it so pleased him, he might have disposed otherwise ; but this is the most excellent, because he hath done it. All our excellency, and all our acting, or suffering, was only of him, and not of ourselves : he alone did ‘ work in us, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.’ The more we were graced, the more we were enabled, the more we were obliged ; only it hath pleased his infinite bounty to perfect in eternity, according as he did begin in time ; and to give us the purchased possession, by way of reward. In our Lord’s distribution of his rewards, he considers the multitudes of talents, and the improvement of them, and way of improvement ; as, if with vigour and great sincerity ; also perseverance therein, and duration, with more and more magnanimity unto the death ; also the greatness of the opposers is considered ; also the effects, and extending of talents, for the good of others ; as when a man acts bravely, before sun and moon, whereby great glory doth redound to him, for whom are all things ; and many are strengthened, and converted unto righteousness : suffering is considered in itself, as such, excelling acting ; which is more or less excellent, even as acting, according to other various circumstances. O the wonderful way thou hast taken to beautify thy spouse ! how doth the head shine most eminently above all the members ; and every member according to its measure, allotted from eternity ? Every one of us was appointed, before the foundation of the world, to this measure of glory, most absolutely and freely, without any respect to excellency, or good works in time : and yet, O eternal admiration ! ‘ He hath rewarded every one of us, according to our righteousness ;

ness ; according to the cleanliness of our hands he recompensed us ; for we kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from our God : for all his judgments were before us, and we did not put away his statutes from us ; we were also upright before him, and we kept ourselves from our iniquity : therefore hath the Lord recompensed us, according to our righteousness, according to the cleanliness of our hands in his eye-sight : for with the merciful thou hast shewed thyself merciful ; with the upright man thou hast shewed thyself upright ; with the pure thou hast shewed thyself pure ; and with the foward, thou hast shewed thyself foward : for thou hast loved the afflicted people, and hast brought down the high looks. All thy promises to the overcomers thou hast perfectly accomplished. Boundless happiness for evermore !

55. *All things are fully discovered in glory, which lay hid in time.*

All things are laid open before the eyes of all : how exceeding clear and evident is the light of glory ? Do I not know you all, and every one ? not only according to your proper essences, and weight of glory ; but also, what manner of persons you were in time, as to all these circumstances, by which men were differenced from one another : so that we may say, This, and this is the man, who was such and such an instrument in time, for the incomprehensible glory of our never-enough exalted Redeemer ; who will manifest all the good works, and excellency of every one before his Father, and before his angels. He from eternity knows by name, and hath manifested the name of every one, before the whole

whole creation. Are you not eternally ashamed and confounded, you haters of the only excellent One? You are declared by name before all, and every one in particular; the most hidden things of darkness are now laid open for ever and ever: all your thoughts, your words, your deeds; all your inclinations, your purposes, your projects, your impieties are made known perfectly to the consciences of every one of you, to one another, and to us all. Hide yourselves now, if you can; neither yourselves, nor your wickedness, shall ever henceforth escape our view. Now we are inconceivably elevated above all natural sagacity, natural illumination discovered wonders, as the sagacity of man in his first estate did shew; the light of grace was more piercing, as discerning things far above the reach of nature; but all are scarce emblems of this light of glory. How 'just and ho-
' ly art thou, in all thy ways,' O my holy One! Thou hast for ever unmasked the two great companies of men and angels; all now appear in their genuine colours: our innocence is manifested, and their wickedness is laid open. How many things did we refer unto this day, as indiscussable by dim-eyed mortals, who judged according to externals, conjectures and probabilities; and not according to the things as they were in themselves? whence the condemning of the innocent, and justifying of the guilty: whence many went off the stage of the world, branded with the opprobrious names of hypocrites, new gospellers, traitors, seditious, factious, fanatics, and what not; who were the glory flower and excellency of the generation: how many of the most excellent of the earth were cried out against on every side, because of their singular holiness, and fervency of spirit, for the

interests of Christ, and power of godliness, above others; because of their testifying against the proper sins of their generation; so that even some of the weakest of the saints did cast abroad foul aspersions on them, did hate and persecute them, as troublers of the world? And how many were accounted, by the generality, true and sincere saints, because of their selfish prudential way of carriage, in all exigencies, and among all sorts of persons; because of their large recommendations from all, and baseness of spirit, in the public interests of God, though rejected, deserted, blasphemed and trodden upon by almost all; because of their compliance with the humours of most, and insinuating of themselves upon both good and bad, in an humble and loving manner; because of their sinful reservedness, in the matters of God, in a declining time; because of their keeping themselves free from gross outbreakings; because of their counterfeiting of real saints, by acquiring a fine outward carriage, and a huge literal, notional knowledge of divine things; that they might pray, write, and discourse like men, much in the intimate fellowship of Jesus: as also because of their outward prosperity, which give men a brave lustre in the eyes of dull mortals. All, all is now unmasked! now, now it is manifest, who were excellent, who were not; who have been the real friends of the Bridegroom, and who have been counterfeit. How sweet is the righteousness of God, now vindicated! what delight to behold all things drawn out of darkness! my hatred to impiety and hellish madness is so great, and my zeal for the glory of my never-enough exalted Lord and Redeemer, is so violent and strong, that all natural affections, in their highest perfection, would

would here be swallowed up as nothing: to see the glory of divine vengeance manifested on father, mother, sister, brother, son, or daughter, now black and ugly lumps of hell, and haters of the fountain of all loveliness and sweetnes, is a sight eternally pleasant.

56. *Among the many appendages of the fair inheritance, the sweet fellowship of men and angels is very considerable.*

O how sweet a dispensation! how wonderful is divine providence! you who were sweet and profitable company to me in my pilgrimage, for ever walk with me on the tops of the glorious and majestic mount Zion. Sirs, I esteemed and loved you above all then, as the only 'excellent ones of the earth, in whom was all my delight.' But now, love is in its bloom and full perfection. What a golden life would I have esteemed it on earth, to live in the company of the most wise and excellent in all ages? O now, all the excellent of the world are my companions; every one of which transcends, by millions of degrees, in wisdom and excellency, the most excellent mere man on earth. O ye beloved ones, is not our fellowship far changed? 'Old things are passed away, and all things are become new!' All earthly ties are broken asunder, which did much hinder the fellowship of saints on earth: we are every way free! the spiritual relation hath swallowed up all other. No obligation betwixt us, but that of love: we hold not any thing mediately; Jesus the first-born of the Almighty King is our immediate superior in all things. O glorious magnific kingdom! O let the crown for ever flourish on the head of the Conqueror! what tho' all this assembly of men and angels should be abased, if he be exalted?

what tho' all should decrease, if he increase? what is the flower and chief excellency of all created glory? He is the beauty and triumph of all creatures, the head and first-born of every creature, infinitely more than all creatures; he is JEHOVAH.

57. *The saints are eternally acquitted; and all their faculties are filled up with his ravishing voice.*

All things are eternal; the saints are eternally acquitted and justified; and all the wicked are for ever impanelled and condemned. In how ravishing a manner doth our Wellbeloved smile upon us? for ever doth he stretch forth the arms of his love to embrace us? O the sweetness of his lips! the loveliness of his voice! honey and butter is under his tongue, and the smell of his nose, is as the smell of Lebanon: his eyes are ever fixed upon us; every look, every beckoning of the hand manifests a love, ever to be admired, and never to be comprehended. O his voice, his voice! is he not saying, 'Behold, and for ever behold your Lord, your Head, your Husband, your King, your Maker, your only Wellbeloved, who loved you with an eternal love; washed you, when polluted, in mine own blood; and made you kings and priests to my Father and your Father?'

Did I love you, when vile and abominable? and shall I ever hate you, when made fair and lovely, through my perfect comeliness? Come, my fairest spouse, come, my lovely one, let us satiate ourselves with ravishing loves, while the heavens remain. Behold these arms, that were stretched out upon the cross, for your sakes, are ever ready to embrace you: with desire have I desired this golden day of mutual loves and delights; even this day of my espousals and gladness of heart; and

and therefore I have put on my marriage-robcs, arrayed myself with glory and majesty, as with a garment: and you also have I decked with the excellency of glory. And, can we be but ravished? 'Thou hast ravished my heart,' my sister, my spouse! even when thou wast black, thou wast precious in mine eyes: sin and vileness is nothing in the way of mine infinite love. I loved thee, because I loved thee: and because I loved thee, therefore hast thou become exceeding lovely. Are you not dear unto me? are you not my delight and rejoicing? you are the fruit of my labours, sufferings, sad hearts, tears, sighs, groans, fear, pain, shame, and reproach: in seeing you, I behold 'my seed, the travel of my foul, and am satisfied: enjoy me now, as much as your soul desires. All mountains are removed, all shadows are fled away; the occasions of your doubtings, jealousies, and despondencies, are no more: we shall enjoy one another to the full. Love shall be no more pained and sick of delays. Have I not hastened to this eternal day of enjoyment? how have I dispatched much in a small time? I have come 'skipping over the mountains, leaping over the hills.' I swummed through seas of blood, oceans of tears, worlds of woes and griefs; trode the wine-press of the wrath of God Almighty; crushed the people in mine anger, and trampled them in my fury; made my name to resound throughout the whole world; filled the earth with the knowledge of my name; erected a glorious church on earth, of Jews and Gentiles; put away time and days, decried for ever all earthly pleasures, pomps, and glory, that we might enjoy this eternal day of love's fullest manifestations: and behold, I am become all in all unto you for evermore.

more. Rest, my dearest spouse, in my bosom: rest in your love unto me; behold, 'I rest in my love unto thee, and rejoice over thee with singing.' Hast thou laboured with me? here is an eternal repose. Hast thou mourned? partake of my boundless joys. Hast thou suffered for my name's sake? thou shalt eternally ride with me in my majestic, triumphant chariot of glory: thou shalt no more be sick of love, thro' absence and want of the light of my countenance; whence ill thoughts, and doubtings of mine unchangeable love arise. Kiss, and kiss for ever, and take thy fill of love-embraces. His banner of love shall ever overspread us! it is nothing what thou hast been; since I have elected thee, and washed thee, and made thee surpassing beautiful and excellent, and thou hast become mine: my life, my blood, my soul I did give for thee: I have become like thee, and made thee like unto me, that our fellowship might be most intimate and sweet: and what, my fair one, could I have done more, to make thee superabundantly blessed? have I not fitted thee for my fellowship? have I not adorned thee with superexcellent beauty, glory, and majesty? Nothing can shew forth thy pleasantness, thy surpassing excellencies: all trees, all flowers, all roses, and lilies, all the beauties that adorn the spangled heavens, would blush, to contend with thy surpassing beauty; all their perfections are but emblems of that substantial excellency, wherewith I have beautified thee. Thine eyes would overcome me, I could not look upon thy beauty, if thou didst not draw near; that love may be satisfied with full enjoyment.' Can there be greater blessedness? can there be more intimate fellowship? O what love-embraces! what love-kisses!

what

what overcoming smiles! we bathe ourselves in the oceans of pure unmixed love! 'The very smell of thy garments, my fair one, ravish my heart, they exhale a fragrancy like a field which the Lord hath blessed! even my Father hath blessed thee, and thou art blessed for evermore. All who have cursed thee, have been cursed; and all who have blessed thee, have been blessed. 'The eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are everlasting arms: and he hath cast out the enemy from before thee; and hath said, Destroy them. Thou dwellest in safety alone; the fountain of Jacob is open unto thee. O people saved of the Lord, the shield of thine help; and who is the strength of thine excellency: thine enemies have have been found liars unto thee; and thou hast trodden them upon their high places. O are you not blessed, eternally blessed, who have been appointed to so great things? Glory, excellency, strength, beauty, honour, and all are yours! behold, behold, ye children of my everlasting loves and delights, these precious crowns, these garlands of glory, wherewith I adorn you! Behold, behold, all creatures, devils, and wicked men, thus is it done eternally unto the men whom the King delighteth to honour. 'This is the majesty I clothe them with, who have loved, feared, and obeyed me, unto death, in their generation. This is the kingdom, these are the glorious mansions, in which I have set them down. I spake not to you, my fair ones, of earthly kingdoms and possessions: you were ordained to these celestial habitations, as your everlasting country. I told you of worlds, and kingdoms, and crowns, and sceptres, and cities, and glorious mansions; and behold, inconceivably more than I promised: yea, did you not inherit

inherit time also? did you ever want journey-bread, as long as you were on the way to this country? though, for your good, I did not laden you with the thick clay of the earth, I ever carved out that lot which was best for you, which was not a life of earthly abundance: if it had been otherwise, I should have made you the only sharers of earth, the only potentates of time: but dunghill earth was far below your divine minds. How degrading had it been, to see thy fellow-heirs vexed, turmoiled, and distracted with dunghill concerns? No, your generous spirits were exercised with high and excellent things, and were not brought down by the empty concerns with which the sons of the earth were only occupied. My way to this unspeakable glory was through contempt, reproach, afflictions, poverty, shame; and I could not dignify you, more than by making you partakers of my lot, my excellent ones: if I had plunged you into the midst of earthly prosperity and abundance, you would have missed the greatest glory, which is suffering for my name's sake; your crown should not have been so massy and glorious: and where would have been the exercise and trial of all your graces? your patience in tribulations, your meek, quiet, and contented spirit, when the vilest of men were exalted, and did abound in temporal enjoyments, sharing the earth among them, as if they alone had only derived their pedigree from Adam? where had been manifested your confidence in your heavenly Father, if sense had not seemed to contradict the promises? Thus was the draught of my infinite wisdom, that your way to the crown should be through all manner of trials, afflictions, and oppositions. Great was your agony with

with devils, with wicked men, with your inbred corruptions, with many external disasters; even unto hunger, thirst, nakedness, and sore trouble for your daily bread: and should it not have been thus? for, if no enemies, no fighting; if no fighting, no victory; and if no victory, no triumph: is not here a golden chain of wonderful wisdom and love? Possess for ever this glorious kingdom, my valiant ones, a kingdom ordained for you most freely and absolutely, without respect to work or excellency: yet, possess it by way of conquest: my free grace, given to you in time, do I crown with this eternal and exceeding weight of glory: all this kingdom is for every one of you, as if there were none else; all of you are possessors of all things. I have redeemed you from eternal wrath, misery, and finning; I have purchased all things for you; I have prayed to my Father, that you, whom he had given me, might be for ever with me where I am, to behold my glory, which he hath given me; for he loved me, before the foundation of the world. These, lo, all these are your portion. Earth was a portion for the bastards only; and therefore I divided it most largely amongst them, allotting crowns and principalities, and the greatest earthly things of time, to the vilest of them: to indulge your childishness, I gave sometimes to some of you large portions of the earth; for many ends, known only to myself, and for giving you a breathing time, lest the spirit that I had made should have been brought to nothing: but earthly portions were only fit for base spirits; poor and empty were the donations I vouchsafed upon them, in comparison of this. When I give to you, I give like a king indeed: when I have 'ascended on high, and led captivity captive,' I

share no less among my friends, than everlasting, everflourishing kingdoms and principalities; and this is the manifestation of free love, before the corner-stone of the earth was laid: here, as every where, doth my absolute sovereignty shine. I am Alpha and Omega. There is no cause of my actings without myself: by me, through me, and for me are all things: for you have I chosen vessels of glory and honour, that on you I might shew forth that infinite bounty, love, and compassion which dwelleth in me.'

58. *Reprobates are already judged, and condemned; and all their faculties are filled with the dreadful roarings of the Lion of the tribe of Judah.*

How doth our holy One fill the senses of cursed reprobates with his dreadful voice, wherewith ten thousand worlds might be shaken to nothing! how doth the Lion of the tribe of Judah roar forth! ' Be eternally confounded, from my amiable presence, vile wretches, you are a smoak in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the day long. Your soul abhorreth me, O prodigious monsters! and my soul abhorreth you. Betwixt us this unquenchable hatred shall increase throughout eternity: as your hellish violence, and monstrous abominations do increase, eternally will I kindle the flames of my fury upon you; so shall I be eased, refreshed, and comforted; I have been wearied with restraining: now is this unquenchable fury, that burned in my breast, broken forth, and my soul is delighted. Did such an hellish madness possess you, as to think you might escape my avengeful hand? And knew ye not yourselves, bits of creatures, rebelling against me, the omnipotent Sovereign of all things? Let your own selves accuse yourselves

yourselves of your horrid villany against me, the boundless original of all excellencies, loveliness, and sweetnes, which you experienced, ungrateful wretches: did you prefer, and love, and desire only yourselves? shall the creature be set up above the Creator? The unparalleled baseness of this doth eternally affright you. You are intolerable tormentors to yourselves: for you behold your vileness as it is. Did you not think, because of my silence, that I was like to base you? But now I will eternally reprove you and set your sins before your eyes: now you see your wretchedness. What think you of your holding the truth in unrighteousness? so that you became 'vain in your ' imaginations, and your foolish heart was darkened; professing yourselves to be wise ye became ' fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible ' God,' into the vain fancies of your desperately deceitful hearts; still looking upon him, as one like yourselves. What think you of delighting more in created enjoyments, than in me, the fountain of all joys? Your affections bended most to nothings and vanities: the fountain of all blessedness you abhorred. Did you not say, 'Let him depart ' from us: for we desire not the knowledge of his ' ways? What profit is there in serving him?' what pleasure in being in his fellowship? yea, what a weariness is it? Let us have earthly enjoyments, and we desire no more; these are the only things we delight in. What think you, that you are born enemies, haters of me from your very first original? With your first breathings of life, did you breathe forth malice against your Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; and what can you do eternally, but roar with your malicious blasphemies? But what availeth either your malice, or

your goodness? I am infinitely above all creatures. What is that to me, whether creatures obey, or disobey? What are you, that I should be mindful of you, and bring you into judgment? What are you, that my anger should burn eternally against you? Yet it is my pleasure, that upon you be manifested the glory of my avenging justice: As I have sworn, so have I performed, that every knee shall bow to me. You stiffnecked wretches, would ye not yield to the sceptre of my government? I will make you stoop, and lick the dust like serpents, under my feet, and the feet of my chosen, whom you hated and despised, in a vain world. 'I alone will be exalted, and my glory will I not give unto another.' Would you not be the actual instruments of my glory? I will eternally make you the passive proclaimers thereof: your cursings and howlings shall set me on high, even proclaim the glory of my spotless holiness throughout all ages. Cursed creatures, whom my hands formed to serve, and obey, and glorify me; shall I not recompense your hatred and rebellion upon your own heads? shall not my soul be fully avenged upon you? You are the abomination of my soul; and therefore vengeance shall be my eternal delight. I am of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: triumph I not? 'I the righteous, 'Lord love the righteous; my countenance doth 'behold the upright: but the wicked, and him 'that loveth violence, my soul abhorreth.' According to my absolute sovereignty, might I have made out of you any thing I pleased; but thus have I done, that the glory of my spotless holiness might eternally shine forth: for as I said, so have I done, and it is known, whose word stands, yours or mine. Said you, in the stoutness of your hearts,

'Our

‘ Our tongues are our own, who are lords over us? ‘ We are lords, we will no more come unto thee.’ And shall you not find, to your eternal misery, who is the great Former, and absolute Sovereign of all things? And you the vilest of all vileness, to whom most lovingly I offered my heart, my blood, my life, my kingdom, and all things; and yet you slighted and neglected all, as things of no great excellency: O mine enemies, mine enemies! slain and destroyed ye shall be eternally before mine eyes. I have no enemies like you, unto whom I most condescendingly revealed my will, appointing your lot within the pale of the church. I have found you, O mine enemies, you haters of my holiness, and despisers of mine excellency, who at the most loved ‘ a form of godliness, but denied the ‘ power thereof.’ Did I rise up early and late, crying unto you? did I beseech, intreat, protest, obtest, sigh, weep and groan over you, that you would come out from your vain conversation, and partake of a blessed communion with my Father and me? and shall I not cause you to howl, and roar, and weep, and gnash your teeth, in utter darkness for ever and ever? Have I not intreated long? should I wait for ever upon creatures madly furious against me? I have sworn by my holiness, that after death there shall be no more forbearance; the word hath gone out of my mouth, it cannot be recalled: I am not a man, that I should change. I appointed a time for every thing; a time of forbearance, and a time of punishment. This is the eternal day of wrath; the endless day of vengeance is in my heart; ‘ The ‘ year of my redeemed is come:’ I curse you, I bitterly curse you; all the woes that ever I pronounced fall upon you; let them be written upon your

your foreheads, and on your hands, and fill all the powers and faculties of soul and body: Wo, wo, wo! world of woes and curses fall down incessantly and eternally upon you all, according to your wickedness: as every one of you hath sown, so shall you reap. Wo unto you, who have 'joined house to house, and field to field,' extruding Adam's fellow heirs. Wo unto you, that have mingled strong drink. Wo unto you, that have drawn iniquity with cords of vanity; who have called good evil, and evil good. Wo unto you, who were wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight. Cursed be ye, that placed your confidence in creatures, and not in the Lord JEHOVAH. Wo unto you, who shut heaven both upon yourselves and others: wo unto you, who 'devour-
'ed the needy, and for a pretence made long
'prayers.' Wo unto you, who compassed sea and land, to draw others unto your faction, under the pretence of the salvation of souls: wo unto you, who, by your foolish subtleties, did cast a mist upon all the duties of religion: wo unto you, who were strict in the circumstantial and externals of religion, and careless of the power and life thereof: wo unto you, who pretended love and reverence to the dead saints, because they could not testify against you; but maligned, persecuted, and contemned the living ones, because of their opposing the sins of the generation wherein they lived. O cursed wretches, the flames of my rage shall feed themselves upon you: try your stoutness and magnanimity now; the threatening of my fury and indignation did little affect you: you gave me the lie, and said, 'It is not the Lord, 'neither shall evil befall us.' When my hand was stretched out, you would not see; but now you see,

sec, and feel, and are everlastingly ashamed. Your Atheism is quite done away: know ye not now, that I am a God of truth and equity? have I not performed all upon you, that ever I spoke? are you not filled with wrath? is not foul and body tormented with the dreadful flames of my fury? do not I shower down upon you incessantly fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest of all manner of pains, griefs, and torments? Devils and wicked men, tear and torment, and curse one another; you concurred bravely in sinning, concur in your punishing; you loved the fellowship of one another, be eternally together: companions in time, and companions in eternity. The fellowship of my holy ones you little esteemed; I have made betwixt them and you a vast gulf of eternal separation: had you known their dignity, you would have wondered, that I suffered you to abide in the same world with them. What think you now of provoking me, vile wretches? are you the creatures that thought highly of sinning? are you able to despise and mock at the just punishment thereof? No more vain laughing and jollity; the fewel of your base sinful delights have I taken for ever from you: not one smile of joy from henceforth. All the mercies I vouchsafed upon you, ye did use against me; the more I continued my bounty, the more you rebelled and vexed my holy Spirit; though 'in me you lived, 'moved, and had your being,' yet you forgot me, and minded your own worldly things more than my glory and interest in the world. All your actions were subordinate to base self; even your most excellent-like actings and sufferings for my cause, were ever out of one selfish design or another: I will fill you with your own ways. You shall

shall not be troubled with offers of mercy any more, nor with the exercises of godliness: nothing but blasphemy fills your hellish mouths. You shall not be vexed with the company of my saints any more: you shall have your fill of one another's hellish fellowship throughout eternity; your choice and delight shall not be taken from you. Know you not who I am? Am I not he whom you despised and forgot? am I not he whose yoke you brake asunder from your necks? am I not he whom you defied, and proclaimed war against? Gird up now your loins, like men, and maintain your quarrel valiantly; shew, by your magnanimous deportment, the justness of your enmity against me. Desperate wretches, you have not the heart to submit; neither are you able to stand against one billow of my indignation. It was plainly manifested unto you that all would come to this; but your minds were filled with vanity: I am free from the ruin and unspeakable misery of you all; you alone have destroyed yourselves: madly and desperately have you run to your own destruction; and who was obliged to stand in your way? Who hath struck you with such a monstrous hatred to all good, and inclination to all evil? are ye not naturally wicked and abominable? are you not haters of my holiness and excellency? had ye not from the beginning a strange aversion to my spotless holiness? Blasphemous wretches, you see my ways are equal, to your eternal torment and confusion; your mouths are for ever stopped, and you are found guilty: nothing have you to say for yourselves, your monstrous hellish frame is as a thousand witnesses against you. Should not I alone be exalted? should I not crush to pieces all the despisers of my

my glory? shall I not for ever cause you to drink of the pure and unmixed wrath of the Almighty, which is poured forth without mixture? that ye may be filled with my fury and indignation, and may be drunk, and made mad, and torment, and tear, and devour, and curse yourselves, and one another; that every thought may bring in a dreadful horror, and hellish pangs. O mine enemies, mine enemies! whom I made the shields of the earth, who became greater in wickednes, than in your worldly greatness: you ringleaders of iniquity, betrayers of the great trust with which I dignified you; the ruin of thousands shall fall on your heads. Did you not tyrannize without law or reason, alledging that you were accountable to none for outrages, but unto me? that you might fulfil your wicked desires without control? O vilest of wretches, whom I set over my church, to defend her from all external damages, to hold her in all her glorious privileges, which I left her in my legacy, and to hold the crown upon my head, in despite of the opposers; did not you make havock of her? did not you rob her of her ornaments? did not you pull the crown from off my head, and put it on your own? did not you neglect the affairs of my church, and make them subordinate to your own temporal, vain, transient affairs? did not you put that sword into the bowels of my chosen, which I gave you to protect them with? O mine enemies! I will neither fight with small nor great, in comparisom of you; even you I will for ever be avenged upon; you, and all your parasites, executors, applauders connivers, and consulters to your horrid rebellion. Durst you, ye base, ye vile wretches, be so monstrously audacious, as to usurp my prerogatives? durst you

destroy, imprison, banish, torment, and be as thorns in the sides of my excellent ones? What you did to every one of them, you did to me; I will recompense it. It had well become you, 'to stoop and lick the dust at the feet of my brethren: it had well become you, to hold up 'the train of my robe-royal, in the day of my 'wounding; it had well become you, to have 'honoured, and reverenced every one of them, 'from the highest to the least: had you consider- 'ed their dignity, you would have wondered that 'I permitted you in my providence, to dwell in 'that world which they inhabited; far more to 'have had any manner of superiority over them.' Here I meet you, my cursed enemies; know you with whom you contended? Am not I He, whom you contemned, despised, impoverished, im- prisoned, banished, maligned, and spued out the venom of hell against? I am He, whose blood you esteemed as water; my brethren you hated, be- cause they bare my image: for my sake, even for my sake, you perfecuted them; whatever were your pretensions, the power of godliness was the butt of your malice: durst you malign the exer- cising of my Spirit of grace, in its highest actings, as a spirit of sedition, and rebellious combinations? did you take it upon you, to shape out the govern- ment of my church according to your foolish fancy, as an indifferent thing? as if I had left any blanks in my testament, for you to fill up ac- cording to your hellish pleasure. You, even you, with the betrayers of my interests and people, will I place eternally in the hottest of my fury: be eternally confounded, all mine enemies to- gether: sects, ranters, civilians, devout naturalists, formalists, carnal gospellers, latitudinarians; you have

have I chosen, before all ages, vessels of wrath and dishonour, fitted to destruction; that over you I might shew forth my absolute sovereignty, long-suffering, power of my wrath, purity of my holiness, and infinite perfections.

59. *All the creatures are sharers of this eternal day of joy, except reprobate men and angels.*

Clap your hands, and be exceeding joyful, O thou creation of God, who art for ever loosed from vanity and bondage: 'This is the day which the 'Lord made,' rejoice and be glad in it: this is the eternal day of the restitution of all things: shout and cry aloud, ye lower heavens, and dance, thou earth; sing melodiously, O ye heavenly hosts, sun, moon, and stars: O ye mountains, are ye not eternally skipping, like lambs? You vallies, you pleasant fields, are you not ever smiling, and shouting for joy? you have been wearied, and worn out, in serving sinful creatures, you have been defiled, and written over with vanity; but now are you renewed, and made pure and clear. How earnest was your 'expectation of the manifestation 'of the sons of God! for you were made subject 'to vanity not willingly, but by reason of him 'who had subjected you in hope; because you were also to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the 'glorious liberty of the children of God.' O fair, beautiful, and delightful creation, all things now are thousands of times more excellent than at the beginning! nothing dwells here but righteousness! thou art not now, O earth, the stage of all wickedness and rebellion against thy Creator; thou groanest not under the weight of sinful abominable wretches. You fields, you are not divided, and possessed by the vilest of men, who, by the benefit of the reve-

nues cast out of your fruitful womb, were, in their own eyes, and in the eyes of silly fools like themselves, excellent and considerable persons; you furnish not fewel for their stinking pride, tyrannizing, and villainous pleasures. It was by you, under the appointment of your Creator, that the vile worms of the earth appeared somewhat; being clothed over with the scenical garbs of riches, and titular honours, else they had been vile in one another's eyes, as now they are to all eternity; having no internal, real, or personal excellency worthy to be accounted of. Out of thee, O earth, do not come the precious fruits, for filling the bellies of wretched miscreants, who did eat and drink largely, and wallowed in all earthly delights; when the only excellent ones of the earth, through oppression, were sometimes pinched in the necessaries of a mortal life: out of thee do not come instruments of cruelty, the weapons of war, with which the seed of the serpent did kill, and torment, and persecute the blood royal of heaven: out of thee do not come the beasts, wearied with serving and holding up the filth and off-scourings of all things; the horses are not groaning under lumps of death and hell, riding in a brave and gallant manner, with a fine train; joining battle with the camp of the saints, that they might destroy the righteous from the earth, and have none to stand in the way of their hellish endeavours, their monstrous triumphing and tyrannizing, as absolute sovereigns of all: the sheep are not wearied in furnishing coverings and gaudy apparel for the vilest of creatures: now they have not a rag to cover their nakednes; there is no silk or fine embroideries for the vile carcases of hellish monsters: the excellent creatures are not

not now slain to support the life of base miscreants, ten thousand degrees below the lowest of beasts. Thou air, thou art not an instrument any more, whereby the wretched souls and carcases of cursed sinners are kept together, in a tolerable condition; base and treacherous enemies to God and man, do not now defile thee, by drawing thee in, and out, for the preservation of their abominable life. Thou water, thou art not now used, by the devil and his slaves, as instruments of their cruelty against the only princely and noble persons, the co-heirs of heaven and earth, and all things. Thou art not, O fire, compelled violently, against thy nature, to reduce to ashes, with great torment, the precious bodies of 'Zion's children, comparable to fine gold.' You sun, moon, and stars, you shall not shine upon the wicked, as well as the righteous any more: you do not lose your sweet influences upon the abomination of heaven, and earth: are you not in your own kind happy, by being freed from such grievous bondage; more grievous, than to be corrupted, destroyed, and broken into a thousand nothings? O what joys! all dance, and rejoice! all are in a melodious frame! the virtue of my Wellbeloved's suffering and exaltation extends superabundantly to all things. No wonder that we are plunged into the oceans of unspeakable joys and delights! tho' all were in a mourning apparel, we could not but eternally abound in joys! this is the eternal day of our redemption, the 'day of the restitution of 'all things.'

60. *All things are renewed, and glorified, but nothing is annihilated.*

O thou lower world, thou art made new indeed! O such a majestic, glorious fabric out of the

the ashes of a dunghill! O heavenly earth! or earthly heaven! wonderful! not a new creation, but a renovation of the old, that perished by the fire of his indignation! O my Lord, thou canst make any thing out of any thing thou pleasest: beings, and nonentities, are all alike to thee! verily this is a change, wherein infinite excellency is highly manifested. What joy, to behold the face of all things! our seeing of the first temple will not cause us to weep, because of this second: here is a magnificent royal palace reared up, in the place of a dungeon; a stately, majestic city, in the place of a few poor cottages. Was the former fabric real; or was it not rather imaginary? were they not fools, who were only delighted with it? were they not bewitched, and led away with fancies, night dreams and vanities? I thought the former earth, in the days of my mortality, full of the glory, bounty, riches, and excellency of the great Former; and was it not? Yet was it a dark shadow to what mine eyes now behold. This is a change which could never have entered within the conceptions of the most excellent creatures! this is materially the former, and yet not the former. It is manifest, my Almighty One, that thou canst create ever so many worlds, differing altogether in excellency from one another; but thou hast done it, because it so pleased thee; just, and holy, and wise, and true art thou, in all thy ways. This is the stage whereon thou actedst most wonderful things, as a prelude to this endless day of eternity: whereon thou didst unite an inconceivable mass of various dispensations, which will fill eternity with admiration: here didst thou display the banner of thy mercy and justice in the very same traces of providence, so that the wisest

of mortals could not discover thy footsteps; here thou wroughtst the never-enough admired work of our redemption; here thou wooedst thy bride; here thou preparedst thine enemies for the time of vengeance; here thou madest all things ready for this everlasting day; and therefore in thy wisdom hast thou continued it an eternal monument. Oh! thy sovereignty runs in the channel of thine infinite love and bounty? thou mightst return all things back to their original again; but thy goodness is for ever extended over the works of thine hands: 'Thy glory endureth for ever; 'thou dost rejoice in all thy works:' shall I not then rejoice in them? shall not I, in considering them, be eternally ravished? might it not render a creature eternally blessed, to consider thine infinite glory and perfections, written on thy handy-works? Even in the days of my childhood, I could not open mine eyes on the most ordinary productions of thine excellency, without strange stirrings of love, joy, and admiration. O the ravishing sweet sights that even then I have seen of thee, through the glafs of the creature! how have my thoughts run in a maze of ravishing delights and sweetnes, while considering the vastnes and expansion of the canopy of the lower world; the beams of thy chambers, laid in the waters; the clouds, thy chariots, whereon thou didst gloriously ride; the winds, the pavement whereon thou walkedst; thine omnipotent power, in laying so firmly the foundations of the earth, that it cannot be moved; the prodigious overflowing of the waters, when they overwhelmed the earth; the unsearchable manner of bounding the boisterous waves of the raging sea, by sandy bulwarks; thy wisdom, in watering the vallies from the mountains,

tains, and the mountains from the sea and the heavens, so that the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field might drink abundantly: the excellent virtues of base dunghill earth manifested in its rich, pleasant, sweet, various, and lively offspring; as grass, herbs, flowers, shrubs, trees, and innumerable multitudes of beauties, filling all the fenses with the greatest delight, and subservient to all the exigencies of indigent mortals; as nutriment, medicine, clothing, and habitation: the wonderful eye of thine omniscient providence over the most inconsiderable creatures; as the conies and goats, who were provided with fit refuges from all danger: the exact ordinances of sun, moon, and stars; the vicissitudes of light and darkness, for the several conveniencies of men and beasts. In the midst of such ravishing thoughts of thy power, wisdom, and goodness, how have I been filled, according to the measure of mortality, with inexpressible joy and sweetnes? so that I could not but cry out, with ravishing astonishment, 'O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all! the earth is full of thy riches!' and again I fell into the deep contemplation of the greatness of the sea, its innumerable progeny of small and great animals; thy wisdom in the appointment of navigation, and thy power in the leviathan's playing there; thy rich bounty, in holding a well-furnished table, to so numerous a family, as the people of heaven, earth, and sea; their necessary dependance upon thee, every moment, in their living, moving, and being; so that they are not, if thou draw in thyself, and the vivifying Spirit which thou communicates unto them. Have I not, O my God, been in many such sweet meditations,

until

until I have been wrapt up into a frame of spirit, unutterable, inexpressible? until I sung forth in the midst of such sweetnes, 'The glory of the ' Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in all his works: I will sing unto the Lord ' as long as I live; I will sing praises unto my ' God, while I have my being, my meditation of ' him shall be sweet; I will rejoice in the Lord.' How oft have I thought, Is the wilderness so sweet and pleasant? what must the inland be? Is there such ravishing variety of beauty, glory, and sweetnes, thro' the whole of my pilgrimage? what can I expect to behold in my native country? Is the habitation, where devils, wicked men and beasts inhabit, so excellent and glorious? what can I think of the place where Jesus, the Emmanuel, with his fair white company of saints and angels, everlastingly abides? Is my God's footstool so glorious? what must his throne be? Is the undervault of this base dungeon so majestic? O the higher hall of glory, where the glorious King, and his magnificent court remain! Doth the habitation correspond to the inhabitants? the higher world then must inconceivably transcend this lower. And is this earth so sweet, when cursed and defiled, because of its abominable inhabitants? what shall it be when renewed, and made only an habitation of righteousness? shall not every place excel Eden? and Eden the celestial camps? Indeed, O lower world, we might, in our mortality, conceive something confusedly of thy renovation; but could never have imagined that thou shouldst have been thus. O earth, thou appearest to be placed after the former manner, to be of the former magnitude and figure, as to every point corresponding to the same points of

the heaven of heavens; also the lower heaven differs not in magnitude, situation, and number of tapers, from the former; and only herein do the old and new world agree: now, the smallest star would have confounded the inhabitants of the old, and made the very sun to evanish in its light: the beams of light darting every where are substantial; filling not only the eyes, but all the senses with inexpressible delight; it contains innumerable perfections and virtues, not to be perceived by mortals; their senses being few, and capable of little: but now, every sense is equivalent to ten thousand thousand differing in kind from one another: the light of one luminary confounds not the rays of another, though all are united and made one: the moon appears to change faces, by the nearer approach to, or distance from her King; yet she is ever more glorious than the sun in his former condition: every star showers down millions of millions of various influences, which in a moment would convert the former earth into a lump of gold or gems: all are transparent, even the sun, moon, and stars, though compact solid globes of light: no veil drawn betwixt the higher and lower habitation: no smoky fumes betwixt heaven and earth: no winds, nor storms, tempests, pinching colds, nor piercing heats. No vicissitudes of summer and winter; nothing but an eternal spring-tide and endless summer, a constant harvest: all are in their blooming estate, and fullest perfection. What wonder! is it not the centre of infinite influences? the sweet influences of Pleides are never bound up, but are every minute showered down; the bands of Orion are ever loosed; and is not the heavenly earth so impregnated with such infinite virtues? is it

not

not so lively and vigorous; so full of the seeds of innumerable excellencies, as that in itself, it is beautiful, fruitful, and excellent, without influences from creatures of an higher nature? In its own nature doth it not contain the virtue and operations of sun, moon, and stars. How infinitely various are the sensitive vegetables? what beauty, and glory, and virtue is to be found in every one? the smallest pile of grass might alone banish darkness from the whole universe. O the roses and lilies! every one like a star in its proper orb: all things are like lamps of light; yet nothing hindering the varieties of colours, which are infinitely various, and wonderfully lively: all the rays of such innumerable beauties and excellencies, tho' united in one, are nothing troublesome, thro' their intensity, but the more delightful; and all lights, all colours, all excellencies as infinitely intended. O then their surpassing pleasantness! every thing appears endowed with all manner of excellencies, as colours, figures, &c. and so to be a little world.

What may be said of this, in comparison of the former? This is beauty, the former was deformity: this is light, the other darkness: this is liveliness and activity, the other deadness and laziness: the former was a confused, deformed and loathsome chaos; out of which is made this excellent, beautiful and glorious fabric. Who can behold, and not smile and leap for joy, at the bounty and power of JEHOVAH, so visibly manifested? And what sweet, cheering breathings do so harmoniously found among the stately trees of this universal paradise? O what diffusing of delightful, odoriferous exhalations! one gale would cause death itself to be lively; being a thousand times

more excellent than the most pure and refined animal spirits of mortals: one gale of this would have rendered the former earth a fertile Eden for many ages: eyes and ears, and all the faculties are lost in an endless maze; to find a beginning, middle, and ending, is a task for eternity. All is one orchard, one paradise, one field, one garden of delight! the most curious artifice of cities, palaces, or what else, would be deformity. Nature now cannot be bettered by helps; JEHOVAH hath ordered all, in an order above the invention of all creatures. Eden here would be like a black spot on a fair and beautiful face. Every drop of dew, that dangleth on these trees of God, excels rubies and carbuncles. All the rivers run liquors above the most precious quintessential extractions of the former world. May it not be called indeed, 'the golden age?' They who behold thee, see the floods of honey and butter. May they not heap up gold, as the dust; and gold of Ophir, as the stones of the brook? How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings? We are abundantly satisfied with the fulness of thy house; and thou makest us drink of the rivers of thy pleasures. Thou visitest the earth, thou waterest it, thou greatly enrichest it with the rivers of God, which are full of water; thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and all thy paths drop fatness: the hills, the little hills and vallies shout for joy, and sing, The Lord is our keeper, the Lord is our shade on our right hand; the sun doth not smite us by day, nor the moon by night; we are secure for ever and ever; all thy promises are more than fully accomplished. Men and angels, the product of his everlasting counsels

counsels is all brought forth: it is done, thus it is, because it thus pleased him. ‘Holy, holy, holy
‘Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is
‘to come! Thou art worthy to receive glory, and
‘honour, and power; for thou hast created all
‘things, and for thy pleasure, they are, and were
‘created.’

61. *The triumphing over the wicked, is a part of the saint's glory and happiness.*

O beautiful, glorious, and joyful world! all have been sad-like until now: who can open their eyes, and not be overjoyed, though they extracted their delights only from creatures mediately? But what is this to you, lost wretches, shut up in utter darkness? your best world hath eternally vanished: this is a black miserable world to you. What have you to do with this fair creation? It is ours, only ours; for ‘we are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.’ Even the former earth you took for your country; heaven and happiness was only yours by usurpation and oppression; but now you shall usurp no more: if any thing be yours, it is that bottomless lake, wherein you crawl, like so many filthy toads, snakes, and abominable vermine: to behold you, would confound any creature, not endowed with immortality. O monstrous sights! O the infinite power of JEHOVAH! which can shape out after this fashion: your structure agrees with your vileness; your countenance corresponds, excellently to your hellish minds; and you cannot but affright one another with your desperate hellish looks and minds; blasphemy, and horrid desperation is written on your foreheads, even the wrath and fury of JEHOVAH and the Lamb: one of your ghastly looks would affright millions of mortals. You are, O dreadful vileness! extremely miserable,

miserable, yet not objects of pity: you might have stirred up compassion in the most zealous breasts on earth, because then you were endowed with some small relicts of the image of your Creator; but how fully is the saying of our Well-beloved accomplished on you? 'From him that 'hath not, shall be taken away even that which 'he hath.' All the sparks of goodness are evanished; and what can remain, but a mass of all impiety, and direct hatred of God? Nothing like this was seen on earth. Now you appear in your own colours; God hath stripped you naked of all. Where are all your excellent gifts, your prudence, and civility, your fine natural disposition, your love to God, of which you talked so much? Now it appears, that 'the heart of man is deceitful a- 'bove all things, and desperately wicked, even a- 'bove imagination.' On earth, because of natural ties, we could not but love you; your eternal rebellion not being manifested to us: but now you are for ever our Lord's stated enemies; so that tho' he would offer you pardon, your cursed hearts would no less rise against him; your hatred is unquenchable, and augments throughout eternity. Fools, are you belching out the venom of hell against him, who for ever tramples you under his feet? do not your cursings, and horrid blasphemies found forth the justness of his avenging wrath? Not because of his wrath and displeasure against you, are you mad against him; in the midst of his bounty you did continue in your enmity.

His holiness, his spotless holiness is the butt of your hellish malice: your wickedness is arrived at its perfection; mortality was not capable of displaying the ten thousandth part of what is now manifested:

manifested: you were always averse to the fellowship of the ever-blessed God: now you directly avouch your enmity, as just and equitable, in despite of your consciences teaching you right and wrong. Know you not, that he, against whom you have eternally sworn yourselves enemies, may use his power over you? And you would do so over him and his. What would you do with his holy ones, if you had their everlasting lot at your disposing? Is not his mercy over all his works? since he layeth not upon you the ten thousandth part of that punishment which he could; and his sovereignty and displeasure carve out the measure of your punishment: but, is there any measure, which he might not in justice inflict? When it is augmented with ever so many ages, and your strength augmented to bear it; never can it be said, He inflicts more than is meet; since your rebellion is against an infinite Majesty, and is of an endless nature: since you are ever sinning more and more, therefore you are obliged to his everlasting mercy and bounty.

O my God, what a delightful change is this! I will rejoice, yea, I will for ever rejoice in beholding! What now, you some-bodies of time, where is your gay clothing, your fine well pampered carcases? what think you of these vile, abominable, ugly, clubbish bodies, which you only cared for, and would have so finely deckt, as if they had been made of some celestial substance, and not of the same lump of which all mankind was made? what is become of the excellent majesty and reverence, which silly flattering fools made you believe, was stamped upon your very bodily visage? where is your brave attendance, which you imagined followed you, for your real excellency? where

where is that admiration had of you, beastly wretches, because of advantage? what think ye, base sycophants, of the men to whom you trusted and whom you adored above God all sufficient? see you now any majesty, or excellency in such poor, base, trembling captives? are they not the same that they were? only the fig-leaves that covered them are taken away. They imagined themselves some-bodies, while they possessed earthly abundance: how highly did they look, because they seemed to have some more shovel-fulls of earth than others? But now the lofty looks of man are humbled, and the haughtiness of man is bowed down; and the Lord alone is exalted in this day. What now, tyrants, silly captives; are you the very same men that made the earth to tremble? The Lord hath 'broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers: your pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of your viols ceaseth, the worms are spread under you, and the worms cover you:' are you not despised in the eyes of all, whether in heaven or hell? the Almighty hath laid open your nakedness, he hath discovered your secret parts: fools, were you never thinking that it would come to this? did you imagine, that the vilest of men should domineer over the most excellent forever? that 'the wicked might oppress the man more righteous than himself,' and yet no alteration be made to all eternity? did the Almighty create man after his image, to eat, and drink, and pass away an inch of time, and no more? was it the purpose of the wise Disposer of all things, that men should be ranked according to the fancies of riches and titular honour, acquired by vanity, and maintained by folly? What think you now of those

those whom you contemned not long ago, whom you esteemed as the 'filth and off-scourings of 'all things,' whom you thought unworthy of your excellent presence, because they were not laded with the thick clay of the earth? What distance and reverence looked you for from fellow creatures, as if they had been made for so base an end, as to uphold your *yeas* and *nays*? as if bowing and cringing, and such histrionic vanities had been requisite for the sons of wisdom? O joyful day of eternity! wherein all things are unmasked; all odds are made even! the fore-thoughts of this held up my heart, in my sad pilgrimage. Now, wretches, it is evident, who on earth should have been most honoured and esteemed, who should have had the chief place among men; who sees not now, that wisdom is the principal thing? How vain was the esteem of the world! were they not fools, who in the least regarded it? who considered things only according to their external shews. Catives, what think you of your fools-paradise? your golden dream hath miserably beguiled you: earthly riches are decrided; the vain denominations of time are fled away. Only wisdom for ever remains. What then, are you, poor wicked wretches, exposed to the shame, contempt, and mockery of all the world? are you not made a gazing stock to God, angels, and men? you snatched at fancies, and neglected wisdom, which would have rendered you excellent for ever and ever. They that practised best your foolish modes and inventions, that could comply best with your foolish humours, that knew best how to scrape together the pelf of the earth, were esteemed wise and accomplished by you: as for the truly wise (who were ever very

rare, and the wonders of their age,) you contemned and reproached them as the dregs of mankind. How did you triumph over the poor and meek of the earth, while your world remained, which was but for a moment? An everlasting world is now come; may we not triumph in our turn? which of us hath chosen the better part? judge ye: present things you esteemed only real; and wondered at our folly, who lived upon the hope of things to come; yea, and to come after death, and the dissolution of all things. And are you not fools, who neglected immortality, and glory, and honour, tho' you had a miserable, pining life on earth, earning your daily bread by sore labour and grief? could not a frowning, vexing world loose your base minds from it? O vile wretches, esteemed you earth, in its winter-garb, before the eternal enjoyment of the Fountain of all blessedness? Verily your mouth is eternally stopped. Wretches of wretches, who were endowed with the knowledge of the only excellent things; who spake, and wrote to the good and admiration of others: wonderful! knew you so much of the al-sufficiency of JEHOVAH, the emptiness of all things below him; and yet did not put your trust in him, did not care for a near fellowship with him, but placed your love and delight on vanities? You are to be doubly punished, who knew your Master's will, and did it not: good had it been for you, vilest wretches, that you had been idiots, and sots: how did you despise some of the excellent ones of the earth, because of your more sagacious nature? Your heart hath not been upright before God; your knowledge puffed you up; charity hath been away; your gifts and abilities have you not used to his glory, for whom are all things: but

but self hath been the end of all your endeavours. What a glorious lustre had you then among weak saints! the rottenness of your heart was over-vailed with a multitude of natural gifts and education; but he who knoweth all things, hath found you out; he hath weighed you in an even balance, and ye are found wanting. Now it is manifest, who is the searcher of the hearts, and the trier of the reins: were they not wise, who overlooked the approbation of men, and gave all diligence to be approven to thee? What thy thoughts are concerning a creature, that it is indeed. Many hypocrites have passed off the stage of time, with the passport of many of the saints; but thy well done hath only landed fair in thy blessed kingdom. Indeed, Lord Jesus, in time thou madest a brave separation betwixt the righteous and the wicked; how oft hast thou sifted thy church over and over again, with smaller and smaller sieves? so that the difference betwixt the wheat and the chaff was very discernable. How oft hast thou drawn the controversy betwixt thy friends and thine enemies, to smaller and smaller concerns? so that many, who for shame could not, in palpably gross things, comply with the devil and his slaves; yet in matters that seemed of less consequence, did side with them; whence their hypocrisy and luke-warmness in the matters of God did appear. O apostates and betrayers of the interests of JEHOVAH and the Lamb, your mouth is eternally stopped! many fine excuses did your hellish minds invent, in the midst of your villany: your fine subtleties, drawn from prudentials and politics, are now laid open before sun and moon. You were too wise and prudent to take the plain way, and come to the streets for God: you were of too

meek a nature to hold the devil and his slaves at long weapons; you were of too fine and subtle a spirit to speak in plain terms of the controversies of the time, and sins of the generation in which you lived; you were too courteous and submissive to contend with the very shields of the earth, in every thing which concerned 'the Prince of the kings of the earth:' no, you were not such fools, as to incur the deadly displeasure of those who had authority and power in their hands: yet would many of you have been ranked in among the camp of the saints, whereby you were esteemed as excellent amongst some of the weaker ones: now it is evident that you were base traitors, playing with all hands, for your greater security and advantage; and that you have been lukewarm and indifferent in the royal prerogatives and honours of the great and mighty Lord of all things, and the welfare of his spouse. You stoned enemies against JEHOVAH and the Lamb, what think you of your desperate madness? thought you to conquer and destroy the friends and darlings of the high and mighty One? did you imagine that you were triumphing, when you prospered in persecuting of his church? fools, that was one of the great ends for which the Almighty raised you up, that you might scour and rub the vessels of his temple: useful instruments were you in the hand of the great Actor; by you he hammered and polished the stones of his house; by you he cleansed it of filth; by you he pulled it down, in order to a more excellent fabric: you, you did the Almighty use, as slaves, in all servile employments; and when he had fulfilled his intentions with you, he cast you into the fire. Vile wretches, is it not a dreadful torment, to look our Lord

Jesu

Jesu in the face? how doth his presence, and the presence of his holy ones abash you? Where are now your high and lofty looks? what feared and astonished-like countenances! are you the men that spoke so highly against the work and people of God? are you the men who mocked his holy ones, or not? are you the men who cared not for our fellowship, but thought the world might be well enough without these heavenly creatures? were you weary of our neighbourhood, as troublesome; because of our stoical (as you fancied) and precise principles, contrary to your loose and worldly way of walking? now you have your will, you are no more troubled with our fellowship; the tares and the wheat are eternally separated; now your hatred and envy cannot reach us; we tread you for ever as dung among our feet. What are your cursings and blasphemies to our Lord and us? could a filthy toad defile the sun, by spitting venom upwards? could the smoke of the lower region darken that lamp of light? could the blustering winds make the stars to tremble? could the proud ocean with its turbulent swellings, beat down the pearly foundation of the higher house? Your envy and malice is a vehement flame, burning up eternally your soul and body: your own wickedness is poured out upon you, and it burneth as the fire; it 'devoureth the 'briers and the thorns, and kindleth in the thick- 'ets of the forest, and they mount up like the 'lifting up of smoke.' Wickedness containeth its punishment in its own bosom. All our desires are fulfilled: the zeal of our God's house did eat up our heart, in the days of our pilgrimage; but now we are overjoyed, in beholding the vengeance: much of the vengeance of the wrath of our

our God did we, with exceeding joy, behold when we lived within time. How oft did he appear for the salvation of his people, 'with garments rolled in blood?' how did he overturn a whole world by an universal inundation of waters? how did he burn up countries and cities in one hour? how did he make earth's devouring jaws swallow up many of these with which it was burdened? By sword, by famine, by pestilence, by the beasts of the field, how hath he made the carcases of his enemies to be spread like dung upon the face of the earth? What strange judgments have we seen upon families and persons in conformity to their iniquities? How signal was his providence over the children of men? so that men were convinced, and could not but say, 'Verily there is a God that judgeth righteously in the earth; verily there is a reward for the righteous and wicked; a difference betwixt him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not.' But all was emblems, types, shadows, and representations of what we now behold: all the vengeance inflicted on cursed wretches was just nothing. What was mortality capable of? All the wrath inflicted in time, meeting in one, was nothing to one moment of this everlasting day of pure and unmixed vengeance: the inflicting of punishment in time, was only for the sake of the spectators, that 'the inhabitants of the world might learn righteousness.' Vile creatures, do you not know whom you should have feared? what think you of your prodigious madness, who feared feeble nothing creatures, like yourselves, and forgat and despised the threatenings and judgments of the infinite One? What could all creatures do? all their wrath and fury, compared to the vengeance of the

the Almighty, is like a small drop to a boundless ocean. Find you not now, that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God?' O what billows of divine vengeance! what oceans of wrath hath he treasured up at his right hand! every drop whereof might confound ten thousand worlds, 'The Lord hath come out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also hath disclosed her blood.' 'For behold, the Lord, a mighty and strong one, who, as a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, doth cast down to the earth with the hand: The name of the Lord is come, burning with his anger; and the burden thereof is heavy: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is a devouring fire; and his breath as an overflowing stream, doth reach unto the midst of the neck. How doth the Lord go forth, as a mighty man? how doth he stir up jealousy like a man of war? he crieth, he prevaleth against his enemies, I have for a long time held my peace, saith the Almighty, I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry, like a travailing woman: I will destroy, and devour at once, multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is in the valley of decision. He hath come down, and trode upon the high places of the earth; and the mountains were molten under him, and valleys were cleft; as wax before the fire, and as waters that are poured down a steep place. The nations saw, and were confounded; they laid their hand upon their mouth; they licked the dust like a serpent, they moved out of their holes like worms of the earth; and were greatly afraid and confounded because

because of the Lord our God: for he is jealous
and revengeful; he revengeth, and is furious;
who can stand before his indignation? and who
can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His
fury is poured out like fire; and the rocks are
thrown down by him. O thou enemy, destruc-
tions are come to a perpetual end; but the
Lord's anger endureth for ever; he hath pre-
pared his throne for judgment. Sing praises
unto the Lord, that dwelleth in Zion. When
he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth
them: he hath not forgotten the cry of the
humble; the needy have not always been for-
gotten; the expectation of the poor hath not
perished for ever. Upon the wicked thou rain-
est snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible
tempest: this shall be for ever the portion of
their cup. O love the Lord, all ye his saints;
for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plenti-
fully rewardeth the proud doer. The Lord is
righteous, and all his works are done in truth.
All my bones shall say unto the Lord, Who is
like unto thee? who deliverest the poor from
him that was too strong for him. Thy mercy,
O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness
reacheth unto the clouds; thy righteousness is
like the great mountains, thy judgments are a
great deep. Many, O Lord my God, are the
wonderful works which thou hast done; and
thy thoughts which are to us-ward they cannot
be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would
declare and speak of them, they are more than
can be numbered. Sing praises unto God, sing
praises, sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
The Heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved;
he uttered his voice, the earth melted; the Lord

" of

of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Through God we do valiantly; for it is he that treadeth down our enemies. Surely men of low degree were vanity, and men of high degree were a lie; to be laid in the balance, they were altogether lighter than vanity. God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God; also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy; for thou renderest unto every man according to his work. Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; thou hast broken Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; thou hast scattered thine enemies with thy strong arm; but mine horn hast thou exalted like the horn of the unicorn: I am anointed with fresh oil; mine eyes see my desire upon mine enemies; and mine ears have heard my desires of the wicked, that rose up against me. Who is like the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven? He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the needy out of the dunghill; that he may set him with princesses. I will exalt thee, my God, O King; I will praise thy name for ever and ever; I will speak of the honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works; thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth to all generations; bless the Lord, all ye his angels, that excel in strength; bless the Lord all ye his saints: bless the Lord, all ye his works, in all places of his dominions; bless the Lord, O my soul. Hal-llelujah.

62. *Reflections upon the victorious power of faith, and on the folly of unbelieving worldlings.*

I, thus to triumph over death and hell! am I eternal victor over so strong and numerous enemies? O ye gates of hell, could ye not prevail against me? might ye not have destroyed ten thousand worlds of the like of me? what hath become of all your boastings, that you have not been able to destroy poor me, when assisted and helped by my Wellbeloved? Strange! have not I overcome you in the midst of great weakness and infirmity? O the strength of faith! I laid hold on him who is mighty; I trusted in him, and therefore I could not be moved: I took hold of the Rock of ages; and what could ten thousand raging seas have done unto me? These who hold gripes of him, may swim safely through the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Devils, and wicked men, you were fools to assault us: did you expect, because of our weakness and mortality, to vanquish us, and carry the day? If you might have overturned the Rock of ages then might you have overturned us; for we relied upon him; and it was a repugnancy, to imagine that he could fail us. No wonder, devils, that you strove to bring us to doubtings, and distrust; for in faith did our strength lie: had you ruined our faith, and brought us to diffidence, or presumptuous foolish boldness, ye had ruined us for ever: but our Wellbeloved prayed to his Father that our faith might not fail us; and he is greater and dearer in his Father's eyes, than to be said nay in a request so earnest. Now it is manifest, that all things have been done by believing; it hath been the sun, original, and king of all other graces: because I believed, therefore I spake and acted for him on earth; therefore did I place the flower and vigour of my love upon him; therefore did I contemn all the glory and

and excellency of time, and would not take them for my portion; therefore did I exceedingly endeavour to do the things that are well pleasing in his sight, and to be more and more like unto him; therefore did I long to see him face to face. Men and angels, through faith in his name, have I entered this blessed place: not by my holiness, not by my strength, and integrity, is this wonderful thing come to pass; but by laying hold on him, who is mighty to save unto the uttermost. Wicked men and devils, I have vanquished you; I have thrown you eternally to the ground; not by the excellency of mine own vigour and courage, but by laying hold on his strength, who sustaineth all things. Faith was the ‘substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;’ for by it we have all received an everlasting name. We believed, that what he had promised, he would perform, though we saw them not, either intuitively, or by deductions from reason; tho’ we had not received the promises, but only had a view of them afar off, yet were we persuaded of them, and embraced them; and confessed ourselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, declaring plainly to worldlings, that we were seeking a place of eternal abode, overlooking the wilderness as a wayfaring place. O fairest Wellbeloved, how was I enamoured and ravished with thy very name, when I had not seen thee! how was I persuaded of the truth of all thy promises and threatenings, as if I had beheld them fully accomplished? how gladly and chearfully did I disengage my heart and love from all temporal concerns, that they might be set wholly upon the great things to be revealed? I believed all that thou spakest, because I accounted thee both faithful, willing, and power-

ful to accomplish: I consulted not with flesh and blood to go and reason, 'Is it possible for such a thing to be?' nay, I overlooked all objections, though ever so plausible and strong, I stopped the mouth of all earthly, sensual, and devilish wisdom, with, 'The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.' But, O my fair One, how doth beholding inconceivably transcend faith! I trusted that thou wouldst perform above all I could ask or think; but how confused, general and childish were my conceptions of what I now enjoy? The highest pitch to which I could bring my conceptions, was to imagine, that 'eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of mortal, what thou hadst prepared for those that waited for thee:' all I could conceive of this boundless happiness, was to consider it as surpassing all conception. How have I been vexed with the baseness and lowness of my apprehensions! how have I endeavoured to strain them above their proper measure; not considering that the childish estate was not capable of manly conceptions; and that mortality must be swallowed up of life, ere the creature can behold thy face and live. It was wisdom to long for this day of immediate fellowship; but folly to desire it within the tents of mortality: all I could then have of thee, was the portraiture which thou didst set down in thy testament; I received love-letters from thee, in earth's childish dialect: thou toldest me of kingdoms and cities, diadems, honours, riches and pleasures: thou didst tell me of thy greatness, majesty and loveliness; all which were things much esteemed of the lower world: but here are neither kingdoms nor diadems, but things transcendently above all such trifles. How ignorant

rant have I been of my happiness! Wonderful! that the hope of this did not make me overjoyed to the death. O silly, hungry wilderness, when I cast back mine eyes upon thee, can I but smile at the childish folly of worldlings, who only desired, endeavoured, and contended for portions and inheritances out of thee: they who purchased most, have acquired nothing; and they who purchased least, can be in no poorer case. What have you gained, base worldlings? Enjoy the fruit of your expectation and labour; now, when the end of all things is come, gather together your purchase, and rejoice for ever in it: what! have you provided nothing for the last days? laid you up no treasures for this time? were you not thinking of this endless day of eternity? have you all been such brutish fools, as to provide nothing for the last day? Strange folly and madness! had none of you so much consideration, as to think, that possibly there might be a life after an inch of time? Were ye wise, or were ye fools, who consumed all your time, in providing for time? Base fools, did God create you for an inch of time? thought you his wisdom made you only to eat and drink, and mind your own base selves; to provide only for your sensual decaying life, and never to aim at his glory, 'To whom, and through whom, and for whom are all things?' Did you imagine it just, that the lower creatures should serve you, and yet that you should neglect the Creator? did you forget him; and should he have minded you, and given you 'rain and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness?' O ingrate wretches! O abominable fools! shall we not tread you eternally under our feet, as the dross and off-scourings of all things? Dross you have coveted and

and desired as your portion; dross you have loved, feared, and served; and therefore you are baser than the basest dross. Did you not consider what lay beyond time? was earth your only desire? then you have judged yourselves unworthy of any more. Did you seek for no higher life, than the dying, evanishing, natural life? have you not then excluded yourselves from this sublime, excellent, and immortal life? would you not believe the faithful and true Witness, who testified unto you, of what excellent things were laid up in store for those who feared, loved, obeyed, and walked with God, in their generation? Would you not rely upon him for time and eternity, but laid hold on a present vain world? yea, and in such a base and brutish manner, as that you did not acknowledge him, nor depend upon him, in your earthly enjoyments, but trusted to your wisdom, your labours, and a thousand vanities? Reap the fruit of your own sowing: you have received your choice, and what would you have more? had you chosen this endless happiness, you had gotten it; and immortal life would have been, by ten thousand times, more sweet than it was. Did you mock, in your hearts, at our folly, who overlooked all visible things, and placed our hope, our joy, our portion, our blessedness on things that neither eye could see, nor heart conceive? And shall we not for ever insult over you now, when your folly is manifest even to yourselves? Our hope hath not made us ashamed: but what hath come of all your aims and hopes? Now we have you eternally as dust under the soles of our feet. O death and hell, we have vanquished you for ever; never shall you be able to rise up again. O grave! O death! show the trophies of your victory.

victory. Through God we have done valiantly; for he it is that hath beat down our enemies! You seemed to overcome us, and hold us in prison; but, through his strength, we have broken all your bands, and ruined you utterly. The victory was ever ours: but all now is fully accomplished; not one enemy is able to shake a weapon any more. Everlasting hallelujah to our God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. O what an endless triumph! wicked men and devils, you were ordained for the pomp and glory of this day. Our Wellbeloved has made our state every way excellent and glorious; therefore hath he ordained enemies for us to combat, vanquish, and triumph over, for ever and ever. That our state might want nothing of the top, and flower, and perfection of glory and exaltation, we have you as a footstool, for ever to trample upon: all things are ours, and for our honour and glory. Now it is evident who were really the great ones. Now doth appear what manner of persons we are. Who but the Lamb, and his followers! who but the First-born, and his brethren! O the height, and glorious dignity of a saint! Sirs, what think you? are we not made great persons? know we our dignity when we were on earth? Surely not, in the ten thousand thousandth part: mortality could not have borne it. Have we not been like young minors, who considered not the glory and majesty of the vast inheritance to which we were coming? and therefore we sometimes degraded ourselves with the familiar converse of base worldlings, and crouched so creepingly as if such beasts had been fit companions for us: but in our childhood we could not conceive these superexcellent royalties.

Indeed

Indeed I ever looked upon all the saints, as the 'only excellent of the earth;' and was oft-times struck with reverence and admiration, at the sight of the least of them: yet then I knew them not; mortality could conceive little. Worldlings, know you not now whom you have despised? Time was when a saint, as a saint, was a despicable nothing in your eyes; pelf, worldly grandeur and applause rendered persons only excellent in your esteem. What was a man's holiness to you, but some imaginary fancies and opinions he had learned by education: and entertained through conceit and fancy? some precise tenets, which were needless and superfluous: for religion, in your judgment, was an easy and trivial matter; the generality were saints: you had a large and wide charity for every one, not transgressing the limits of common humanity; civilians, moralists, formalists illuminated, were all, in your opinion, fit for this glorious and majestic kingdom; fit for entering into this golden city, and for conversing familiarly with JEHOVAH and the Lamb, in this royal hall of glory: you reproached us, as censorious and uncharitable, because we looked upon holiness as a difficult, rare, and excellent thing; because we counted the way to this unspeakable glory strait, and travelled by few; because we looked upon the saints as so many miraculous signs and wonders. Who have judged right is now made manifest to the whole creation. 'We have fought, we have vanquished!' glory, glory, immortal glory to the Captain, the Author and Finisher of our faith for evermore.

63. *What appeared on earth, is really in heaven; for all things are really there.*

O pleasant and melodious world! the former was

was jarring, every part in opposition to another: all things were full of labour, groaning and travailing until this glorious birth was brought forth. It could not stand, being divided against itself; being full of intestine wars, and desolations, it could not fail to come to nought, that this fair fabric might arise in its place. Behold, nothing now but peace and eternal friendship: nothing is out of order; every part agrees with the whole, in sounding forth an eternal Hallelujah to the great Former. All contention and violence are banished, out of this blessed world, into utter darkness: nothing but deep peace and serenity; all things seem to kiss and embrace one another; these eternal gales have no flux or change, though they are for ever blowing. Sirs, is not this gentle breathing, exceedingly pleasant, after so sore and hot a battle? All is perfumed with myrrh and frankincense! One blast might cause ten thousand worlds to live. What a life hast thou, O blessed self? who art filled with, and drawest in these full gales of the Spirit, which bloweth where it listeth throughout eternity. O these wells of salvation! infinitely transcending the pools of Baca's vale! one drop is more delightful and satisfying, than the oceans of all earthly sweetness. What were the broken cisterns, out of which fools were drinking? they were inflaming, not quenching; more fantastical than real. O fools! did not you imagine that you were swallowing down huge varieties of all manner of sweetness? But you awaked, and behold it was a dream. Are you not confounded, when your eyes are opened, to perceive so gross a delusion? Did you not imagine yourselves enjoying riches, and honours, and pleasures? But now the glorious day of eternity is

broken up, and where are they? Here are realities: this land is filled with eternal springs of living waters of all sweetness and satisfaction. Strange! ever drinking, and never cloyed or surcharged: the deeper, and more draughts, the greater is the delight! O my conceptions on earth! O my enjoyments now! I did not in the least conceive them. O my eternally present enjoyments: and yet I have all I could conceive. Whatever pleasure, or satisfaction, whatever can conduce to a life filled with all manner of excellencies, delights and sweetness, is here in the top and flower of all perfection. When I strained my conceptions to the highest pitch of mortality, and imagined glory, excellency and sweetnes, augmented and perfected by myriads of myriads of degrees above all the glory I could perceive or imagine; still I have fallen wonderfully short of this: and yet my conceptions, in part, represented this; for all things are here. Here is an eternal confluence of all manner of good things: who can imagine any thing, which might be here, and is not? What want we, O inhabitants of this wealthy city? Is not this the centre whither all glory and sweetnes run, like a flowing stream? And what wonder? This is the city royal of the eternal King. Here, here he manifesteth, immediately and in open view, his unsearchable riches, transcendent glory, infinite power, boundless goodness, with all the infinite varieties of his inconceivable excellencies. Were they fools, who overlooked base earth, and laid out their whole strength, for acquiring a right to the glorious possession, and the unsearchable treasures of this ten thousand times blessed land of Emmanuel? Poor earth, with thy glistering, nothing enjoyments, whither

whither art thou gone? O real, solid and substantial enjoyments! all the glories beauties and excellencies of time were mere shadows, and resemblances of what I behold. What, there, was in appearance, is here indeed; the real spring-tide is here: here are the true gardens and orchards of delights, here are the substantial roses, lilies and violets; here are the true pearls, rubies and diamonds; all the former were but counterfeit, and in appearance such. I see the difference betwixt things here, and what were in time, is such, as is found between the bare shew, and the substance. I thought I saw crowns and sceptres, honours and renown; but they were vapours, glistering after their similitudes, which are now evanished eternally to nothing; and behold the real diadems, sceptres and honours appear! I thought I found some pleasure and delight; I thought, I beheld great varieties of all kind; but the night is gone, and the day is broken up, which dispelleth glistering shews and vapours, in discovering the real and substantial things: all things are here in substance, which in time were in appearance. Here are the real dwellings, cities, orchards, hills of frankincense, mountains of spices. We were far mistaken, O inhabitants, to speak of any thing, as existent any where else than here; else all our speech and conceptions, within mortality's region, were merely figurative: for, to conceive of things properly, as they were on earth, there was neither sun, moon, nor stars; neither lilies nor roses, nor beauties, nor excellencies: they are here, and only here for evermore. Were they wise, who placed their delights on shadows, and evanishing nothings? Were they fools, who overlooked all the vain fancies of time,

and fixed their minds only on this enduring substance? I have found the substance for the shadow: I, even I am possessor of this world of eternal joy and satisfaction.

64. *A frowning tormenting time, is the prelude to eternity.*

All shame, and sorrow, and vexation, you are eternally gone, as if you had not been: sometimes you possessed us; but the fair and white side of providence is turned up for ever. I see, it was the appointment of eternity, that the head and members should be every way conformed: all that are here, were of no beauty or desireableness for sometime in the eyes of mortals; they were ' despised and rejected of men, persons of sorrow, acquainted with grief; being destitute, and afflicted, and tormented: many moralists, formalists, and lukewarm Christians passed for saints, in the eyes of almost all: but one thing, among a thousand, might have discovered what they were, even that they underwent not the lot of him whom they professed to follow; the world smiled upon them, because they were of the world: other entertainment they did meet with in their progress through earth, than the Chief of ten thousand in the days of his flesh: tho' my Lord could have brought his chosen to this unspeakable glory, through the abundance of earthly ease, peace, glory, joy and delight; yet this narrow way hath seemed best to his infinite wisdom. O ye angels, could you have found out such a noble draught? could you have invented such an admirable way of bringing poor, feeble, sinful mortals to glory? O sweet, sweet dispensation! base earth, that is now for ever evanished, was not my country, but the place of my exile; not my abode, but my pilgrimage; and

and therefore it was well that it frowned upon me, and appeared like the thing, which indeed it was, a vain, empty, glistering nothing. My Lord hath been tender of his darlings, and could not suffer night-dreams and fancies to beguile them, as they might, they being in their childish and mortal condition, if they had appeared with a smiling pleasant countenance. O my God, the greatest curse that ever thou rainedst upon thine enemies, was to give them the desire of their heart: earth they desired, thou madest earth to look kindly upon them: and therefore they are ruined for evermore. I see that the dispensation, which most crossed my own natural disposition, hath contributed most to my advantage: my Lord hath with-held no good thing from me: it was best that I should lead a life of sorrow, torment, and vexation: and it was well that I received a scanty share of earthly enjoyments. My only desire was to finish my course for this unspeakable happiness, and that it should be swift and vigorous; and how excellently hast thou fulfilled the desire of my heart?

65. *Glory causeth a total change in all the powers, faculties and virtues.*

O my heart, thou art changed indeed! how tormenting a burden hast thou been unto me, in the days of my absence! even when I kept most strictest watch over thy frame, thou plaidst me a slip, and bendedst oft from the original of all blessedness, unto vanity. How wast thou drawn hither and thither, by all dispensations? When I imagined I had got thee wrought up to a sublime heavenly frame, how soon didst thou become carnal and earthly again? When thou seemedst all in a flame of divine love and zeal, how didst thou become cold and indifferent, ere ever

ever I was aware? When I rejoiced to find thee in a lively, tender, gospel-frame, how quickly didst thou become dead and senseless like a stone! When I could not but cry out, 'My heart is fixed, my heart is fixed; I will sing; yea, I will for ever be disposed for praises:' how soon wast thou unsettled, and tossed up and down with the winds of vanity! When I could say, 'I will trust in him, and not be afraid; I will not fear, tho' the earth be removed, though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea; the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song, and he also is become my salvation:' how soon didst thou become despondent and fearful, afraid of worms and nothings, and forgetful of the Lord thy Maker, who stretched out these heavens! When thou wast in so sweet a frame, as that I could not but wish to be in the Wellbeloved's immediate embraces; I value not that small brook that lies betwixt me and him; 'though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for he is ever with me:' yet how soon wast thou overclouded and darkened with doubt and confusion; so that thou wouldest have given ten thousand worlds, if at thy disposal for the settled persuasion of a Christ and blessedness? How wast thou sometimes in a strong, enlarged, and cheerful frame, running the ways of the Lord's commandments! thy cry was, What is the will of my Lord? All his commandments are easy, because his: anon thou wast quite refractory; his worship and service was a burden. O my heart, thou art now as I would have thee! O all my faculties, you are altogether heavenly and divine: all, all is swallowed up in full and immediate beholding: after him do ye go, with an uninterrupted,

terrupted, eternal bent: it is impossible for thee, my soul, now in thy Lord's immediate embræes, to fall away from this divine frame; thou canst not but incessantly serve and glorify him, with unspeakable joy and alacrity, since thou eternally beholdest his ravishing countenance. Can doubting enter this noon-day vision of glory, when we have attained the height and perfection of evidence? can any one fear who is incircled within these everlasting arms? This city of refuge is situated above the reach of ten thousand worlds of wicked men and devils. Who can dwell thus, with infinite love, and not be altogether inflamed with unquenchable fires? The first sight of thy goodly visage, my fair One, hath captivated all my faculties unto thee.

66. *Heaven is the sweeter the more dangers we have escaped.*

How have I been choaked with the pestiferous contagion of a vile world? so that I had almost lost my life. The hellish sights and sounds, that have entered my faculties, against my will, made hell and death familiar unto me: I found it one of the most difficult commandments of my Lord, to 'stop my ears from hearing of blood, and to 'shut mine eyes from seeing of evil:' even when I set a guard upon all my senses, my inbred wickedness betrayed the fort-royal, and insensibly received the sparks which fired up all. How could feeble, mortal I, but be confused, diverted, and deadened with the hurry, noise, and vexation of an hellish world? How often have I complained, 'Fearfulness and trembling is come upon 'me, and horror hath overwhelmed me? O that 'I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly 'away, and be at rest: lo, then would I wander

afar

‘ afar off, and remain in the wilderness : I would
‘ hasten my escape from the windy storm and
‘ tempest !’ Ah ! my senses are filled with vani-
ty and mischief, the beholding, and hearing of
blood and evil, hath vitiated my faculties, and
made folly and madness seem common and ordi-
nary to my apprehensions ; so that I cannot attain
unto any suitable abhorrence of wickednes, when
my love and desire after God is faint and weak ;
which is high, or low, according to my abhor-
rence and hatred of evil. It is wonderful, O my
Lord, it is exceeding wonderful, how I have land-
ed in this choice happy place with my life ! the
human nature in its integrity, might have been
corrupted and destroyed in such a noisome and pe-
stilential air, as filled the lower world, while it
was the proper habitation of devils, and their base
slaves : but who can suffer hardship, whom thou
once takest into thy tutorage ? These whom thy Fa-
ther hath given thee, hast thou safely preserved, and
none could be able to pluck them out of thine hand.
The most entire and excellent nature, committed
wholly to its own guidance, could not have been
able to persevere, through the ten thousandth part
of the difficulties and temptations, I have overpassed :
but what cannot thine infinite excellency do ?
There is no security, but in being altogether thine,
and in no respect our own, which happy I have
experienced to my eternal sweetnes, O now the
danger is past ! O lively and delightful air of
Emmanuel’s country ! nothing dwells in this world
of my Wellbeloved’s conquest, but righteousness !
you off-scourings of all things, I am not vexed
with your abominable vileness any more : some-
times you vexed and tormented me, that the
wonderful efficacy of my Wellbeloved’s graces
might

might be the more evidently manifested; but you are vanished, you are vanished away into smoke. O now my senses, you are only filled with the alone Rose and Beauty of this everlasting, ravishing paradise! no sweetness, no fulness, no excellency, but that of the Branch: yea, could the abominable smoke of ten thousand hells ascend this sweet region, it would not be perceived; but be lost, like a small drop of bitterness in a boundless ocean of sweetness. And O! the delightful aspect of the Lamb's fair and white company 'who follow him whithersoever he goes!' what a golden life, in so ravishing a fellowship! nothing but the mutual emanations of surpassing sweetness! nothing but sublime 'hallelujahs to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb,' throughout eternity! O my blessed senses, you are no more filled with vanity and vexation! Now, devil, and his slaves, what can you do? your tempting vexing world is evanished for ever: yea, though it were not, what are you to us? like base cowards, you assaulted us in our childish estate; but what are you all to one of us in our manly vigour? Were you all drawn up in battle-array against me, whom once you thought unworthy of the least of your assaults, I should, with one lifting up of mine arm vanquish you for ever. Nothing in me can yield to hell: sin and mortality is swallowed up of life.

67. *The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick.*

All thy infirmities and sickness, O my soul, are quite eradicated, since I am in the arms of all life, joy and satisfaction. How have I been, in the days of mine infirmity, sick of love for my only Wellbeloved? Strong love was like to die for want of full and personal enjoyment, even when I had

the greatest manifestations on earth: and no wonder; the clearer the discoveries of loveliness, the more ardent the desire of the nearest and fullest enjoyment. O my ravishing Wellbeloved, I no sooner saw thee afar off, by a borrowed vision, than I longed and desired for nothing more, than to have thee in my arms, and to be eternally incircled in thine immediate embraces: no sooner did I embrace thee, as thou didst offer thyself, and was espoused to thee, but I longed exceedingly for this blessed day of eternal marriage. Letters, love-tokens, intercourses by ambassadors, and all manner of mediate fellowship, could not give full satisfaction; nothing but faintings, longings, and desires, until I have thee in my naked embraces. Apples and flagons of wine could scarce hold up my swooning heart, in thine absence; the most excellent enjoyment could do no more than hinder an eternal swoon; only thyself could cheer up the fainting soul. O thyself, thy all excellent Self! what but thy noble Self is worthy of desire? None but thee, none beside thee! O flower of my desires, I am well, eternally well! my fair One, since I have thee in my arms, my tormenting love-sickness is quite abolished from my mind; the beholding of thee face to face, hath swallowed up all former things. I enjoy thee fully, and am I not at the summit of all my desires? Thou hast for ever, my dearest Lord, cut off all matter of complaint. Sirs, I need now be a supplicant to none of you, for the use of your moyen with my royal Wellbeloved, that ye tell him my love-sickness, through his seeming unkindness. Can there be greater intimacy than now, betwixt my Lord and me for evermore! I have entered thy very heart, I lie betwixt thy breasts.

breasts. Can sickness, or sorrow, or infirmity, dwell within the circle of thine arms? Were there any sickness, it should be through superabundance of overcoming loves; but the vessels are fitted for the superabundant oil of gladness, and overflowing of joys. If this ambrosia and nectar of glory be strong and sprightly, the bottles are new, and of a durable structure. What can I say more of my happiness, than that I cannot conceive and express the full emanations of thine infinite love and sweetness?

68. *Grace is an excellent prelude to glory, yet the difference betwixt them is inconceivable.*

Whatever sweetness and delight I enjoyed in time, is now augmented, myriads of myriads of times. By leaving earth, I have lost no enjoyment, not only because of recompence and enjoyment of an higher nature; but also because all kinds of enjoyments are here in an eminent and divine manner. Thy land, O Emmanuel, is stored with all manner of precious things, new and old, which thou hast prepared for thy chosen, before all ages. All the joys and delights that I met with in time, were as so many light essays and small preludes to these substantial and enduring pleasures? all have been slight foretastes of this superabounding harvest of eternity; what was then in drops, is now in oceans, for I am entered for ever into the fountain of all fulness and satisfaction; and what sweetness before I experienced blockishly and in part, I find now in the most evident, sublime, and vigorous manner; even my most refined enjoyments of thy blessed self, were but low, childish motions, arising from shallow improper apprehensions, raised by the contraction of a multitude of borrowed ideas, extracted from lower objects;

which indeed were very glorious and sweet for the time, filling mortality almost above its measure, seeming childhood-glory fallen down on grace's country. But O the vast difference betwixt mortality and immortality! who can but smile at his former apprehensions? No wonder if earthly stupid creatures apprehend this unspeakable glory in a stupid earthly manner. Every thing extraordinary may appear above what 'eye ' hath feen, ear hath heard,' or soul can imagine, unto the mind that hath known this more by faith than sight; more by certain report, than evident experience: for what can the mortal imagine higher, than by the sweet outletting of the glory and desire of men and angels, to be filled and overfilled 'with joy unspeakable, and full of ' glory?' But a drop that would overfill a vessel of the narrowest size, would be as just nothing to one of the capacity of many worlds. Yet what delight and admiration, to look back and consider, how my Lord made bits of half-dead clay, to be ravished with the highest objects, far above the reach of an earthly, mortal condition! but creatures of all conditions are enamoured, ravished, satiated, and overcome, when once thou beginnest, in the least, to discover thy matchless loveliness. What delights, to conceive bits of childish nothings enamoured with thee whom they never saw! and chanting forth their love-songs of praises in the midst of the saddest dispensations, which were fit to torment, bear down, and crush low feeble mortality! O what joy to consider (with the same eye) my converse sometimes with thee in time, and now in eternity; and to compare them together! how excellently doth the espousing agree with the marriage! how nobly doth walking with thee

thee by faith, usher in the personal following of thee whithersoever thou goest! I find thy dealing to the saints in time, is a mystery above the reach of nature in its highest pitch, as well as thy way with them in eternity. Little did, or would the world consider, what a golden happiness I had in the days of my pilgrimage, in thy fellowship: the choicest of their religion was a formal out-side homage with which they mocked thee; but a familiar converse with thee, was a thing they had no experience of: they worshipped thee as a dumb idol; for they did know no mutual inter-course, or desire: thou wast 'near in their mouth, ' but far from their reins.' O the golden hours I have had, in thy ravishing fellowship, within the tents of sorrow! eternity cannot cancel the memory of thy surpassing kindness to me, in my low and despicable condition: I have most sensibly found thy strengthening, cheering presence, in all afflictions and difficulties; I found thee another manner of God, than the foolish world imagined thee to be, even a present help in times of trouble, a God that gave ear to my prayers, and answered them speedily, both by the influences of thy Spirit on my heart, and by thy dispensations. Tho' I was then a child, yet didst thou teach me to discern betwixt thy frowns and thy smiles, the light of thy countenance lifted up, and the turning away of thy face; thou madest thyself familiar unto me; so that I approached unto thee, in all exigencies, as unto a near and intimate friend, of whose kindness and help I was persuaded, and to which I trusted accordingly: I depended and trusted on thee, as a Father, casting all my cares upon thee; so that I was careful for nothing. I learned to know my duty, and the

the way of its performance, and committed the event of all to my Lord and Sovereign absolutely, without the least reservation; being persuaded that he would completely fulfil all things which were entirely committed unto him, because he had promised; and would not make them ashamed who placed their confidence in him. And now I may testify before the whole creation, that thou hast been better to me, in my pilgrimage, than I could have imagined, or have desired, and that the lot which thou carvedst out for me, in time, hath been best for me; I would not for ten thousand worlds that it had been otherwise, as to the smallest dispensation; the most cross and ruin-like dispensations, as to sense, have been the sweetest; as they had the noblest effects, and nearest manifestations of thy love and sweetnes accompanying them. If any have proven in the least bitter and disadvantageous, it was because I brought them on my own head, by my sacrilegious boldness, in disposing of myself, and what concerned me, without Gods approbation, and consent: yet, even these he turned to my good; his power being so transcendently excellent, as to bring light out of darkness; and his love so boundless to those whom he had chosen from eternity, that he would suffer no harm to befall them, but made all things to contribute to their good. O! can we but wonder at, and rejoice in the incomparable condescension, wisdom, and excellency of our Lord, who hath contrived and effected our eternal happiness, after so stupendous a manner? Could we ruin ourselves, since it was his will to save? Could we in the least oppose our own happiness, since it was his sovereign eternal pleasure, to make us as happy as can be? O eternal astonishment!

nishment! the more we have undone ourselves, the more he hath made us happy; the more we have degraded ourselves, the higher hath he exalted us: the more we have hated and provoked him, the more kind and intimate hath he become to us; men and angels, could you have found out such a way to manifest the glory and excellency of free grace? Is it not here manifested in the highest manner?

69. *Praises to JEHOVAH for the accomplishment of his promises to his people, and of his threatenings against the wicked.*

Is it not an eternal question, men and angels, Whether the excellency of our Wellbeloved manifested, or lying hid, be more astonishing? But sure each of them is an everlasting ravishment, which would plunge ever so many worlds into an ocean of never-ending astonishment: one ray of his divine excellency, now immediately beheld, doth implicitly discover, that more and more eternally may be seen; what then should be our immortal exercise, but to bend all our faculties to search, to look in, to admire, to flame in love, and extol the transcendent excellencies of him that sits upon the throne, and the Lamb, throughout all ages? JEHOVAH, altogether excellent, lovely JEHOVAH is a depth in which we have for ever lost ourselves! what are we, men and angels, that we should set him on high? what do we contribute to the declaration of his infinite glory? though we should wear out, to a period, endless eternity with our incessant hallelujahs, could we, bits of nothing, conceive in the least this infinite One? Doth he not bow and humble himself infinitely below himself, that he may be apprehended, as he is, by our finite capacities, in his uncreated loveliness and sweetnes?

sweetness? It is strange that he should satiate nothings with all his fulness! this is a mystery, a wonder! nothing but wonders upon wonders! every preceding act is the admiration of the following, and so throughout eternity. What stretchings of capacities! what bending of all the faculties! O the beauty, the goodness, the sweetness, which dwells from eternity to eternity in him! O the full outlettings upon us! though he were not excellent to us; yet, are we not constrained to love, and adore, and extol him, who is an infinite mass of all excellency? Though he be infinitely above all the praises of all possible creatures; yet, can we but extol him to whom all glory is due? Are we not constrained, who see his face, to express, again and again throughout eternity, to express his infinite perfections? As creatures, we are bound to be all for him; but these stupendous obligations superadded, above all production and preservation, have elevated unto such a frame, that common ties are almost swallowed up and evanished. O his goodness, his goodness! how great is his goodness! and how great is his beauty! every ray, every outletting would ravish ever so many creatures! "I will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and I will declare thy greatness. Yea, all thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee. While I live, I will praise the Lord; I will sing praises to my God, while I have a being. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens

vens of heavens, and ye waters above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever. O sing unto the Lord a new song: praise him in the firmament of his power; praise him for his mighty acts; praise him, according to his excellent greatness: for in this day is the Branch of the Lord beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth excellent and comely, for those that are escaped of Israel, that are left in Zion, and that remain in Jerusalem, are called holy. There hath come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch hath grown out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord doth rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel, might, knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; with righteousness doth he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth: he smote the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips did he slay the wicked. Righteousness is the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf doth dwell with the lamb, and the leopard doth lie down with the kid; the calf, the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child may lead them: for the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. O Lord, thou art my God, I will praise thee, for thou hast done wonderful things; thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth: for thou hast brought down all those that rose up against thee; and art for a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty to thy people. Judgment doth dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remains in the fruitful field; the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righte-

ousness quietness and assurance for ever. An high way is here, and it is called the way of holiness; no lion is here, no ravenous beast goeth up there-upon; but the redeemed walk therein, and the ransomed of the Lord do return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they have attained joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing have fled away. We are the everlasting witnesses of thy glory and excellency. O dread Sovereign, and thy servant whom thou hast chosen: before thee there was no god formed, neither shall there be after thee: thou, even thou art the Lord, and beside thee there is no saviour: before the day thou art he; and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand: thou workest, and who shall let thee? We remember not the former things, neither consider the things of old: behold, thou dost a new thing, and it springeth forth, and we understand it: thou dost even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beasts of the field honour thee, the dragons and the owls; because thou givest water in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to thy people, thy chosen. Thou hast formed us for thyself, we shall shew forth thy praise. 'Thy righteousness is near, thy salvation is gone forth: and thine arm did judge the people; the islands did wait upon thee, and upon thine arm did they trust.' The heavens evanished like smoke; the earth did 'wax old like a garment; and they that dwelt therein did die in like manner:' but thy salvation is for ever, and thy righteousness shall not be abolished: the mountains did depart, the hills were removed; but thy kindness hath not departed from us, neither shall the covenant of thy peace be removed from us. I will mention

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the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon us. Thou didst rent the heavens, and camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence; thou trodest down the people in thine anger, thou madest them drunk in thy fury; and didst bring down their strength to the earth. Tho' many of the earth heaped up silver as the dust, and raiment as the clay; yet the just put it on, and the innocent divided the silver: terrors have taken hold on them as waters; a tempest hath stolen them away in the night; for thou hast cast upon them, and not spared; they would fain flee out of thy hand. We clap our hands at them, and have hissed them out of their place. But thou hast delivered us in six troubles; yea, in seven, no evil hath touched us. In famine he hath redeemed us from death, and in war from the power of the sword; we have been hid from the scourge of tongues; neither were we afraid of destruction when it came: at destruction and famine we did laugh: we knew also that our seed should be great, and our off-spring as the grafts of the earth; and that our enemies should for ever be made our footstools; for thou hast destroyed them for ever, O God; thou hast made them to fall by their own counsels: and cast them out, in the multitude of their transgressions; for they rebelled against thee. They are brought down, and fallen; but we are risen, and stand upright; for thou hast saved the afflicted people, and hast brought down the high looks. We will extol thee, O Lord; for thou hast lifted us up, and hast not made our foes to rejoice over us: Thou hast brought up our souls from the grave; thou hast kept us alive, that we should not go

down to the pit. Sing unto the Lord, O ye his saints, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness; for his anger endureth but for a moment; in his favour is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. We have delighted ourselves in the Lord; and he hath given us the desire of our hearts: we have committed our way unto him, we have trusted in him; and he hath brought it to pass; he hath brought forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day. We have not fretted ourselves, because of him that prospereth in his way; because of the man that bringeth wicked devices to pass; we have waited patiently, and behold, the wicked are not; they are for ever banished into utter darkness: but we inherit the earth, and delight ourselves in abundance of peace. Many have been our afflictions, but the Lord hath delivered us out of them all: he hath kept all our bones, that not one of them is broken: but evil hath slain the wicked; and they that have hated us are desolate: we were not afraid, when one was made rich, when the glory of his house was increased; for when he died, he carried nothing away; his glory did not descend after him: the way of the wicked was their folly; like sheep they were laid in the grave, death did feed upon them; we have now dominion over them in the morning: and their beauty did consume in the grave, from their dwelling. But God hath redeemed our soul from the power of the grave; and he hath received us. Selah.

O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things; his right hand, and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. The Lord is God, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth

dureth to all generations. The right hand of the Lord is exalted, the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly. Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion; for the Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, to all generations. Hallelujah."

THE CONCLUSION.

1. *We ought to write of such things with a trembling hand.*

AH! Wellbeloved, I am beginning to be afraid that I have darkened counsel by words without knowledge. Ah! has this been the effect of my ravishing view of thy superexcellent glory which is to be revealed? to talk so poorly and childishly of such great and excellent things! is a ready way to bring down the low thoughts, that the sons of men have of thee, much lower! and is a destruction to my design here, and to the flower of my desire, which was only to ravish the judgments and affections of the sons of men, concerning the excellencies of thy person, the greatness of thy kingdom, and the glory of thine inheritance in the saints in light. My dearest One, let this never see the light, if it be apt to produce any other effect. Pardon, dear Lord, my childish boldness, and accept the will for the deed: thou knowest, it is my design, to set these on high; but ah my stupidity! ah my childish ignorance! I may say, in thy sight, I am 'more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man; I neither learned wisdom, nor have knowledge of the holy.' When shall

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my childhood be gone? when shall I come to my manly estate? how long shall my faculties be stupid, marred, and out of order? If, just now, I am wondering at my childish expressions of such superexcellent things, what will my reflections be, when I attain to the fulness of the stature of Christ? It quiets my mind somewhat, that I have expressed more, and ascended higher, than the conceptions of most; and that all expressions, and discourses of sublunary excellencies shall blush and be ashamed to appear in heaven: and tho' whatever I shall be able to say, be unworthy of the meanest of thy saints; yet may it be an occasion to some of them, of stirring themselves up to a more heavenly frame of spirit, and to more serious and profound apprehensions of the things which are invisible.

2. *The essence of a saint consists much in heavenly-mindedness.*

Heirs of glory, what think you of your goodly inheritance? the delightful countries, the pleasant habitations, the unspeakable joys, the everlasting pleasures, the inconceivable felicity, that lie a little before you, and to which you are posting? Are you not amazed with the consideration of your wonderful prerogatives? Is it possible for you to bear the forethoughts of what you are coming to? Shall you ever be able to pluck your minds down from such ravishing things? Have not all sublunary excellencies disappeared in your sight? What are the stars, when the sun doth appear? I think I hear every one of you say, 'I have done for ever with painted clay images: for I have seen and found the only real and substantial things. O joy unspeakable, and full of glory! you delights, you sorrows of time, you are much overlooked by me,

while

while I lie thus, within the view of eternal ravishments. One moment's immediate converse with JEHOVAH, and the Lamb, shall eradicate all the impressions of sorrow and grief, that I can possibly undergo. Shall I not see him as he is? Am I not to see him face to face? These arms, even these very arms shall embrace the chief of ten thousand: I shall be forever satiated with his infinite sweetness; even drunk and overfilled with his overcoming loves. O the frame of my spirit! I can say nothing: expressions fail me, in the representation of the high thoughts of my heart! Where am I now? am I not almost in heaven already? Heart, and love, and all have fled thither; nothing remains here, but this vile clay tabernacle; and ere it be long, it will be there also. Verily I am come to mount Zion, to the city of the living God; my conversation is no more on earth.

3. *Earthly-minded creatures might be convinced of the reality and desirableness of heavenly things, by due and deep consideration.*

Silly worldlings, what think you of our world? speak, men, I appeal unto your own stupid selves, which of us are wisest, wealthiest, merriest, most renowned and excellent? Are you not beginning to consider your desperate folly and madness! Are you not admiring the foolishness of your bypast vanity, in spending your strength for transient, evanishing shadows? Are you not almost beginning to fall in love with our blessed country? Yea, are you not content to renounce the love of your dung-hill for it? Are you not come to such a blessed change, in your thoughts? Come hither, the bargain is done, heaven is yours; for it is, Love, and have it. What mean you, Sirs? Why should any of you thus stand wavering? Must you not have

have heaven? If you lose it, what can you purchase? Is there any impediment? Be willing, and welcome. Dare any of you doubt of the reality of the only real things? what! because they fall not under your brutish senses? Then you may doubt whither you conceive, or not. Are ye such brutes, as to think, there is no perception but what is sensual, when the mental is myriads of degrees more evident and real? Sirs, can there be any so mad, as to deny the existence of all the countries he never saw with his eyes, when attested by multitudes of eye-witnesses, of divers sorts and ages? And have not numbers, of all ranks and conditions, of the most excellent in all ages, attested their most excellent discoveries of this happy world? The attestation of one of whom is more worthy, than the testimony of ten thousand ordinary men. O Sirs, want of consideration causeth you to look upon the only substantial things, as uncertain fancies. But consider eternity seriously, and you shall find yourselves moved in another manner, than those who are led away with enthusiastic fancies. Sirs, enter into your own hearts, inquire at your consciences, and you shall find heaven and hell written upon them. Speak ever so much, worldling, against our happy world, thou only manifestest thy desires, not thy real and serious thoughts; thou fightest against thy conscience: the names of thy blaspheming bewrays thee.

4. *Transient thoughts of glory signify nothing.*

Ah! Sirs, I fear many of you have taken but a view of our Wellbeloved's country, by the bye, and no more: will ye not bend hither all your faculties, and consider profoundly again and again what you have seen, until an enduring impression be

be left upon your spirits? What! shall your thoughts be so superficial and transient, as that you shall undergo no transformation in the spirit of your minds, but still remain earthly? What, still earthly? and presently back to earth again? are you like earthly exhalations, which by means of a slight fiery impression, are seen a while aloft, yet still retain the drossy nature, and fall down again? Shall glory be so soon forgotten, as if it were like a wonder of nine days? How are you affected? Are you not in some heavenly frame? And will you suffer it to evanish by negligence, by vain conceits, by worldly thoughts and words, or fleshly lusts? Shall dunghill-earth eclipse the vanishing view you have gotten? Will you become as low and creeping in your conceptions, as you have been? May such a sad sentence be said of you, 'The glory you have seen to day, 'you shall behold no more?' Will you prove like Balaam, who fell to his accustomed baseness, after the elevated sight of Israel's comely tents? Shall you be ranked with the apostate angels, who fell from the highest to the lowest places of the world? Keep your situation if you be wise; fallen stars are most abominable: the higher the exaltation, the lower the fall: better you had never known such excellent things, than to slight and forget them, and be as base and earthly, as if the sound of such astonishing things had never come to your ears.

5. *An invitation to exchange earthly for heavenly things.*

Launch out further and further into the depths of infinite excellencies. Ah! what can we speak of such massy, sublime things? though we should write as many volumes as would fill the whole

creation, earth's shallow dialect is insignificant and mean to represent such substantial things; words here are but silent shadows, and of no efficacy: to come, to see, to taste, would be to know the matter. Sirs, have you any thing to say? Is not the business past all debate? Need we say any more? Can you be so mad, as to be indifferent and inconsiderate in such a weighty concern? Sirs, 'How long will you halt betwixt 'two opinions?' Stand no more aloof: O come, come away, and be everlastingly blessed! Are you not out of conceit with time's worm-eaten glory? Are you not lamenting your former vanity and madness? Are you not wearied of the things that cannot profit? Are you considering things, which never entered within your conception before? What lets you then, that you become not heavenly and divine? Are you not altogether in love with our Wellbeloved, the author of all? Are you not closing with him, on his own terms, as he hath offered himself in his testament? Are you not heartily embracing, and striving to grow more and more conformable to his lovely image, until you grow up unto the perfect stature of his fulness? O then! welcome, a thousand times welcome unto this glorious world of Emmanuel's conquest: you are come unto the joyful and delightful side of the creation. I dare pawn my salvation, that you will never repent of so sweet a translation: your 'light shall 'more and more break forth, unto the perfect 'day:' your progress, through all the difficulties of time, even thro' death itself, will be cheerful and sweet.

6. *The hope of glory swallows up all imaginable sorrow.*

Be of good courage, ye saints of the Most High, ye princes of the world; all things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. It is all one whether dung-hill worms, contemn or esteem you: it is below you to fear such feeble beasts. Overlook the scenical graduations of time; it is below princes, born to so great things, to take notice of such trifles: stand to your royal prerogatives; fall not down from your ennobling exercise; 'Set the Lord always before you, and you shall never be moved: let the world reel to and fro; let the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea; let thousands, and ten thousands fall on every hand;' yet you can undergo no harm. Death, in any garb, is gain unto the person who is in heaven already.

7. Earth worms, who desire to continue such, have nothing to do with heaven.

To you, who will still be grovelling upon base earth, who though ye should read and hear ever so often, of the only excellent things, will go back to the dung-hill again, and vex and torment yourselves with the cares and vanities of a transitory life, who will endeavour and desire to be laden with thick clay; we have only this to say, 'He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.' You have made an excellent choice, poor fools, your paradise is base, empty, hungry, and transient, well befitting such noble and high spirits as you; in whatever account you seem to be, in the eyes of a base world, you are yile despicable worms: crawl, and set up your crest, on your stately dung-hill; but know, if ye can understand, that these vile bodies and souls of yours shall never ascend higher; under our feet shall we eternally trample you; your kingdom being the office-house of our palace-

royal. Fill yourselves with dust, like the serpents; let your day-thoughts, and night thoughts run out upon dung-hill concerns; add house to house, and field to field; heap up treasures for many days; and when you encounter death, or a day of sad affliction, cast up your great and precious gains: have you accounted yourselves unworthy of such unspeakable blessedness? you shall never taste it, but be everlastinglly shut up in that horrid, abominable lake, the most suitable dwelling place for such vile wretches: this dark smokey region you only love, and to utter darkness you shall be driven, 'where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

8. *Christ alone to be exalted and esteemed, who is the purchaser of this noble inheritance.*

Let glory and renown remain for ever upon the head of the author and purchaser of so great a salvation! Can angels ever enough admire him? Can the saints ever enough praise him? where shall we find a throne upon which to set this majestic One? All our glory and excellency is too base and low a footstool for his feet: thousands of thousands of excellent worlds, erected above one another, were too base and low a foundation for him to trample upon. Men or angels, what have you said, or what can you say worthy of him? Were your hallelujahs tuned up ever so many stages higher, yet still they would fall infinitely below his matchless worth: what can we do, in extolling such a lofty One? He is for ever infinitely exalted above all our praises, yet praise him we shall, we shall eternally praise him: all our strength, soul, and might, must be fully let forth to his glory; tho' all that we can do be just nothing. Who is worthy of glory, except our

Wellbeloved?

Wellbeloved? whom should we love, but him? whom should we praise, but him? whom should we admire, but him? Who but he! none but him. O! let all our powers and faculties be eternally filled with him. Ah! it is a foul disgrace for the sons of men to think and speak, and write so much of empty nothings; and so little of this only excellent One! When shall our Wellbeloved be great among all nations? Ah! he is none at all, or little known among the sons of men; little do they discourse of him; and what they discourse is cold and common. Alas! men talk of him, as if he were a common beloved! men esteem Jesu as some ordinary one! they hear of one Jesu, who was slain at Jerusalem, and they are as little affected, as if they read or heard of some common history: the news of his excellent kingdom makes small impression upon them; they think they hear of new worlds, never seen, nor travelled to by any. Christ is an unknown person to the most: the sound of his name hath filled the ears of all, the letters of his name are well known, and no more: but who have been ravished with his good ointments? Who have been filled with the odoriferous emanations of his Lebanon-garments? Who have tasted of his soul-overcoming sweetness? Who have had him as a 'bundle of myrrh all night betwixt their breasts? Who have found him, and held him, and refused 'to let him go?' Who have been led into his chambers of presence? Who cannot live (though in ever so great abundance of earthly things) without a familiar and intimate fellowship with him?

9. Religion is another thing than stupid worldlings imagine; close walking with God, is a hidden mystery unto them.

Poor worldlings, the best of you are but formalists, occupied about the outside and shell of religion: from custom, and a natural conscience, you go through the bulk of the exercizes of godliness; you hear, you pray, you read, you confer, you meditate; you perform duties betwixt man and man, through custom and formality, through shame of others, through vain glory, through the gnawing of a natural conscience, which you must somewhat quiet one way or another. But know you what it is to do all things to the glory of our Wellbeloved? to be afraid, that, in the best of our performances, you offend him, and stir him up before he please? Know you what it is, to look more to the manner of your duties, than the bulk of them? to the principle from whence they flow, than to any thing else? to the intention and frame of your heart in duty? Know you what it is, to watch over your heart, to have a stricter eye over your thoughts and intentions? to be most troubled in reflecting upon, and in guarding against these secret sins of the thoughts and intentions, which no creature can see but yourselves? Know you what it is, to keep up a near and intimate communion with Jesus? to have a mutual intercourse with him? Know you what it is, to wrestle with him, to lay hold upon him, and to constrain him in a manner to bless you? Know you what it is, to 'account all things dross and dung unto the knowledge of the excellency of Jesus.' the only Wellbeloved? are you indifferent to all things but Christ? Is the world, in all its glory, pleasure, and profit, a dead and crucified thing in your eyes? Is the cry of your heart, Christ, Christ, and only Christ; give us him, and we desire no more? O Sirs! have you seen him?

have

have you heard him? have you found him? Know you his smiles, the lifting up of his countenance, his love-embraces? Ah! worldlings, I am speaking of strange things, unexperienced by you!

10. *The saints only know the life and mysteries of godliness; strangers intermeddle not with their heavenly delights, and divine joy.*

You saints of the Most High, you are witnesses of the truth of all we have spoken: have we not spoken poorly and childishly of so great things? We have said nothing, to that which even you experience in this land of absence. O then! sincere one, hath not thy Wellbeloved written more of this his transcendent beauty, sweetness, and excellency upon thy heart, than all the learned of the world can put together in their finest compositions? What can be written or spoken of such great things? Come, see, taste, and feel, will manifest the business best. It was not our intention, O ye excellent ones of the earth, to write to you of things which are in another sort of characters imprinted on your faculties; but only to put you in mind, lest you suffer such noble impressions to decay, in the midst of worldly affairs, temptations, and difficulties: that you may perceive the vast difference between all expression, and feeling: that you may be stirred up to acquire the noble gift of utterance; that you may manifest to the ignorant the excellency and loveliness of your Wellbeloved, and what he hath done to your soul. We have written to you, babes, who are young students in Christianity; even to you, O daughters of Jerusalem, who are inquiring after our matchless Bridegroom, having only heard the ravishing sound of his name, but who never have seen his amiable countenance, nor entered his

his pleasant beds of spices. O that we might be eternally honoured, in leading you by the hand unto him! draw near, O draw near! and ye shall see more, ten thousand times more, than ever you heard of; you shall begin to laugh at your putrid and childish talking of such wonderful things.

11. *The woful state of worldlings; the excellency of holiness; and the necessity of conversion, with marks thereof.*

We have written unto you, worldlings, what we have seen and found, that you may know that there are excellent things indeed, which never fell under your brutish senses; and to let you know, that godliness is another kind of thing than ever entered within your conceptions, that you may inquire after the reality of such excellent things, and strive to get a sight of him who is invisible; that in seeing, you may love him; and in loving, you may be blessed for evermore. Poor worldlings, we cannot but pity you, who cannot pity yourselves: you see not your own base and low condition; for if you could, your condition were changed. Were it possible to demonstrate your vileness and misery? Are you affected with nothing so much as what falls under your senses? What pre-eminence have you above the brutes of the field? the joys, desires, and intentions of both are confined within an inch of time: both are earthly, both are temporal, both decay in a moment, and come to nought. I appeal to yourselves, base worldlings, if they may be termed highspirited whose thoughts and projects are only upon earth, the fashion of which passeth away; as you cannot but perceive with your very bodily senses. Ah! Sirs, is it not even sad? Earth is the centre of all your love and desires; earthly glory, earthly rich-

es, earthly delight affects you most; let you have abundance of earth, and that eternally, and eternally you can live without the enjoyment of JEHOVAH and the Lamb: the kingdom above these visible heavens appears strange Utopian-like inventions, to which, though ye give an historical faith, yet you are affected little or nothing with the news of such astonishing things; but labour, and endeavour, and project more for these perish-
ing things. This shows that you are base earth-
worms, who have chosen this dunghill for your country; who have despised and undervalued the enduring substance; and have not stirred up yourselves, to the deep persuasion of the truth and reality of such wonderful things; but embrace earth, and confess yourselves its natives and home-born slaves. May you not at last see your own baseness and slavery? Are you not ashamed of your former vileness? Are you not beginning to perceive, that the saints are the only excellent and noble persons? Are you not looking upon it, as the greatest misery and baseness, to be earthly in your mind and affections? Are you not accounting it the only dignity and accomplishment, to be humble and divine? Again, we beseech you to be ingenuous, and not to lull yourselves asleep in security's lap, with a number of careless will-be's and may-be's. What, Sirs? Confess you the reality of these wonderful things to come? Confess you, that heaven or hell is the eternal lot of all mankind? Which of them are you making for? You know, according to your preparations here, so you are hereafter to be; as you sow, shall you not reap? If you sow to the flesh, shall you not reap corruption? And if you sow to the Spirit, shall you not reap eternal life? Whether will you

travel the way to the one, or the other? Choose you: God sets life and death before you; beguile not yourselves; God will not be mocked. Will you remain earthly, and yet think to enter the pure heavenly city? Is there a foot-breadth for earth-worms there? If earthly-minded creatures, remaining earthly, may expect to enter the fair and clean Jerusalem, then shall heaven be filled with all sorts of cattle, and hell shall be for ever empty. This is really the opinion of stupid worldlings, whose extensive charity takes in all men that ever were, or shall be. They are of so sweet and mild a disposition, that they dare not, they cannot judge any, but are not ashamed to say, of the basest dunghill worldling, It may be he has somewhat good. But, believe it, earthly-mindedness is a palpable gross vileness, to all who have their senses in the least exercised. Enter your own hearts, poor wretches, and behold your own practice, and the practice of the generality of all those who are about you; and you shall perceive that you smell strongly of earth. Do not all your aims and projects tend earth-ward? Are not your last thoughts in the evening, your first thoughts in the morning, the most of your thoughts all the day long, running upon low concerns? Earth, only earth fills your base minds: few, transient, and brutish are your conceptions of things above: you make eternity your by-aim, and earth the object of your chief ambition. Do you not esteem earthly glory and riches most? Are not these, who are most ladened with the thick clay of the earth, greatest in your eyes? Would you not rather have the wealthiest, the men of most account and power in time to be allied to you, than the afflicted people? Can you not converse familiarly with

with dunghill-worldlings, without any trouble or antipathy? Yea, have ye not the cursed heart, to become one flesh with a black lump of death and hell, if so be they be laden with the earth's worm-eaten trash, or please your carnal inclination, and foolish fancy? Are you not more taken up with your own private, petty affairs, than with the great concerns of Christ, and his church? Have you not more delight in earthly enjoyments, than in the exercises of godliness? Are you not more sensible of your temporal losses, than of your spiritual? Do not your joys ebb and flow, according to the ebbings and flowings of worldly things? Are you not ignorant of rejoicing in tribulation, because of the smiles of JEHOVAH's amiable countenance? and of sorrowing, in the midst of earthly abundance, because the Wellbeloved hath 'frown-ed, and withdrawn himself?' Worldlings, is it not even thus with you? Let your consciences speak, men and women: O! hear them, that God may hear you. I say, is it not most evident to yourselves, that thus it is with you? And are you for glory? Are you for the clean and holy city? Are you not for 'dwelling with everlasting burn-ing?' Are you for walking with the Lamb, clothed with the white and beautiful garments of holiness? Are you for standing among the fair delightful assembly of saints and angels, who eternally surround the throne of JEHOVAH and the Lamb? Are you? Ye base worldlings, as long as ye are what you are, you have nothing to do with glory: stand afar off, Touch not the mount; beasts are not to meddle with so great things: heaven is only for holy ones; for 'without holiness no man shall see the Lord.' Believe it, Sirs, you are ten thousand miles from holiness; holiness is

a strange, unknown thing in the world; the most refined moralists, civilians, carnal-gospellers, and brave formalists have scarce heard the sound thereof: 'There is a path that no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen; and the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living: the depth faith, It is not in me; and the sea faith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold; neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof: no mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies.'

Believe it, holiness, or wisdom, is a rare thing: a saint is a wonder. God hath placed them among the numerous multitude of mankind, like so many signs and wonders: so many saints in the world, so many miracles of nature: a saint, in the estimation of the generality of professors is an ordinary person; but in Christ's, he is most extraordinary. There are fewer real Christians, than the most precise, and strictest in their censures, can imagine. If the nature of holiness were well known, we should wonder, that there is, among all mortals, one holy one; for in very truth, a saint is nothing else but a piece of heaven, a new creature, transformed from the image of hell, into that of glory; one whose conversation is only above, who is 'come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God:' a saint hath not the stamp and fashion of this world; his heart and love are quite gone from him to another place; his words, his actions, and his deportment, manifest

nifest that he seeks a country above, and that he despiseth and overlooks all things here, as things inconsiderable, dead and crucified in his eyes: his joys, his pleasures, his satisfactions, his treasures, lie not here: his torments, his griefs, his misery, lies not in temporal things; his mind is elevated far above the laughings or frownings of a transitory world: its ups and downs, its eb-bings and flowings cannot affect him: his sublime mind is set upon higher objects; for he 'looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal.' Heaven is his soil, his element, the centre of his love and desires: he longs, he prays, he greatly desires, he weeps to be there. The desire of the full and naked embraces of the Chief of ten thousand, overtops and swallows up his desire and love to all other things. What tho' he hath fair, pleasant possessions of earth, many dear friends, and pleasant companions? What tho' he have an excellent wife, and hopeful children? All these are but dross and dung unto the very 'knowledge of the excellency of Jesus his Lord: these are good and pleasant, but nothing to the only Wellbeloved. He can leave them all gladly, to be with him. O my comfort, my children, my friends, my possessions, my hopes on earth, my life, I could not, but with exceeding great grief, be thus separated from you, were I not going to one who is sweeter, dearer, and more lovely to me, above all expression, than you all: the loss of all things is no loss, if I go to the full enjoyment of him whom my soul loveth. 'Whom have I in heaven, or in earth, but him?' Whom do I love and desire but him? no enjoyments

enjoyments whatsoever can quench my longing to be with him: he is my all and only One. Farewell, all lower enjoyments, the love of my fairest Wellbeloved swallows up all other loves. Be closed, my blessed senses, from receiving any more sublunary objects, that ye may be everlasting-ly filled with his transcendent loveliness, sweet-ness, and excellency. And no wonder the saint cannot want Christ, since he is transformed into his lovely image, a partaker of his divine nature; one who is endued with the same mind that was in him; one who hath Christ 'dwelling in him; ' one who hath the kingdom of heaven within ' him:' so that it is natural unto him to tend God-ward and heaven-ward; even as it is natural for the worldling to tend earth-ward and hell-ward. Every thing hath a propensity and love to its own centre and like, and bends off from its opposite: the fire ascends towards the centre and great globe of fire; every bit of earth disjoined, tends back to the whole again. Though there were neither reward nor punishment; yet a holy one must love, serve, obey, praise, and adore his God; for heaven must operate like heaven, even neces-sarily, tho' freely, sweetly, and without compul-sion. Again, worldlings must tend earth-ward, tho' they should find ever so much vexation, tor-ment, and grief in it, tho' he should be ever so often threatened and per-suaded of all the miseries that follow an earthly, sensual, and brutish way of living; since he is all sense, earth, and corruption, altogether destitute of the divine nature. In a word, a worldling is a visible incarnate devil; a saint, a visible incarnate angel; only hell, on this side of time, is not fully accomplished in the one; nor heaven fully perfected in the other. The holy

holy one smells strongly of glory; and the nearer he approacheth to his journey's end, the more resplendent a lustre hath he of heaven: 'the path of the just being as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' O tincture of heaven! their actions have still a greater smell of glory; but all is nothing equal to the glory and excellency of their invisible and inward operation: little or nothing appears without, in comparison of that which is within. O the noble and seraphic thoughts! O the strange motions of love, joy, and admiration above all possible expression! O the ravishing perfumes of pleasing joys and sweetness, wherewith the Beloved fills the heart! it is impossible for the saint, to express by words, what he feels on his soul: all the tongues of men and angels cannot manifest his sweet and noble thoughts of his only Wellbeloved. He would gladly express them to all that are about him, but he finds it impossible. He is sometimes contending with his narrow fancy, that it cannot find out a more sublime, clear, and excellent way of expressing the matchless worth of his Wellbeloved: at other times, he is angry at the cold, shallow, and putrid manner of others discoursing: he would have all men speak nobly, write nobly, act nobly, for Jesus. Nothing vexeth him more than to perceive the generality of men forget him; or, when they speak of him, to talk so coldly and creepingly, as if he were a common, ordinary beloved. He would have his lovely One to fill the hearts and mouths of all: he hates the fellowship where he is not highly esteemed, loved, praised, and adored: he greatly honours, and loves that, (though otherwise ever so low and despicable,) where he is praised.

praised, worshiped and much accounted of. It is his continual torment and affliction, that he hath so low and unbecoming thoughts of him: he is in great rage at his heart, that it should, at any time, go astray from such an excellent object, after vanity: he lays bands on, watcheth over, and commands his heart, to have noble and excellent thoughts of him, and to entertain no other beloveds beside him: he desires nothing more than to have his heart wholly set upon him, and for ever ravished and overcome with his love. And no wonder, since Christ and he are one; one in nature, mind, affections, spirit, and all things: as the Lord Jesus is, so is he, in a great measure. Every one of the saints resembles the children of the King of kings: among all the sons of Adam, there are none like them; for they are 'a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that they should shew forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.' The generality of mankind hath always, from the very beginning, looked upon them as strange manner of persons, and nick-named them with various and strange sorts of names, according to the iniquities of the times and places they lived in; because of their rareness in number, singularity in their way of living and practice, preciseness in their principles, and opposition to the sins of the times in which their lot is cast.

Ah! poor worldlings, do ye not see, that a saint is another manner of person than you imagined? Do you not perceive, that you are as far below real holiness, as earth is below heaven? Is it not manifest to yourselves, that you are not the creatures, whose minds and affections are

heavenly

heavenly and divine ? that you are not of a more noble and excellent spirit than your neighbours ? True, your own desperate, deceitful heart will cause you to imagine yourselves rare pieces of excellency; yet it will give you no demonstration, but only because I, as such, appear great; and so confound every thing, that you may evade us, one way or another. So desperate are worldlings, that they cannot abide to examine their conditions; and when others hold out the light, by which they may discover them, they wink, lest they should behold their own misery and vileness. But, worldlings, may you not see your nakedness, if you will but ask seriously at yourselves, a few ordinary questions, and solve them faithfully, according to the answer of your conscience ?

1. Have you ever felt the pangs of the new birth ? Are you strangers to this ? Know you not, that 'Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven ?' This is strange ! a faint, a regenerate creature, a man born over again ; and yet without pain, or labour : such a great mutation, without great symptoms and concomitants, cannot be. Ah ! most mens religion hath come to them in a night dream.

2. Were you ever at, 'What shall I do to be saved ?' Here, blessed Jesus, I subscribe a blank, put in any thing thou wilt ; and, in thy strength, I will gladly endeavour the performance of all ; only save me ; O save me, else I eternally perish. It is strange, that you have not come this length which many reprobates have come, and yet imagine yourselves saints.

3. Hath the great salvation appeared so great in your eyes, filled so your minds, that it hath overtopped and swallowed up the thoughts of all

other concerns? Are you not come thus far, that some reprobates have, for a time, attained unto? And can you imagine yourselves partakers of the great salvation? Ah, mad delusion!

4. Were you ever sick of sin? Have you been more burdened under your iniquities, than ever you were under any earthly affliction? Do you not find the grievous weight of a body of death? Yea, do you not go lightly under your iniquities? Only some of the grossest of them torment your natural conscience; as for original sin, you know it more by speculation, than by feeling: this doth show that you are dead in sins and trespasses, alienated from the life of God. Can you then imagine yourself such a noble creature as a saint?

5. Were you ever sick of love for Jesus? Were you ever running after him, with the tear in your eye, with your hands upon your aking sores? Were you ever weeping, and groaning, and sighing at his feet, for mercy, and pardon, and reconciliation, and the lifting up of his amiable countenance? Were you ever wrestling with sin, as for your life, and saying, Blessed Jesus, I must have thee; thee to be my Lord, my head, my advocate, my king, my priest, my prophet, my only beloved, or I cannot live! Ah! Sirs, you, who know not experimentally what I am saying, have your religion to seek yet.

6. Were you ever crying, as it were, 'O daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you, if you see my beloved, that you tell him, that I am sick of love?' Have you been fainting because of an absent and withdrawing Lord? Have you had a wearisome night without sleep for Christ, because you could not find him? Know you not, by experience, what I am saying? O then! you are strangers to Christ.

7. Are not your thoughts of Christ so high, that you cannot, in the thousandth part, express them to others? Are not all things dross and dung to you, in comparison of Christ? If you can express all your thoughts of him, you want the mind of a saint.

8. Tho' an eternal enjoyment of all possible created paradeses of joy and delight, filled with all smells, all tastes, all sights, all melodies, all delights the heart of man can imagine, were placed on the one hand; and the eternal enjoying, praising, and adoring JEHOVAH and the Lamb, on the other: which of these two lives would your heart most desire, and run after? It may be you will say, 'I had rather enjoy Christ than all things.' How then comes it to pass, that you long not to be with him? How comes it to pass, that you have more delight in earthly enjoyments, than in the exercises of godliness? Why is meditation of him, on the excellency of his person, and the glory of his kingdom, so melancholly and unfrequent an exercise? why are you not making it your study and delight, to keep up a near and intimate fellowship with the Father and the Son? Ah! poor things, you are altogether ignorant of yourselves; and therefore you talk, you know not what.

9. Find you in your soul a strong and ardent longing and desire after God, still to have more and more of him, till you be filled with all his fulness? Have you a greater thirst after him, than ever you had after cold water in an unquenchable thirst, through a burning fever, or great heat, labour, and weariness? Surely, if you be partakers of his nature, you cannot but bend to him with a strong propensity. Are your desires after him

cold and indifferent, can broken cisterns quench your thirst? Then be assured, you are dead, and have not your senses exercised.

10. Can you discern betwixt the exercises of godliness, and God in the exercise? Are you sometimes seeking him, and cannot find him? Are you not calling unto him, while he gives no answer? Are you ignorant of a mutual converse with him? Do you not find him speaking in your heart, as really as you speak to him? Know ye not what it is to receive an answer of prayer? Ah! then ye are strangers to the mystery of godliness.

11. Find you more delight in his fellowship, when you are alone, than ever you found in all your earthly enjoyments? Have you not been brought into his chambers of love, and rejoiced and been glad in him? Have you not found his love better than wine, and the favour of his good ointment most cheering and refreshing? Nay, found you not, in some measure to your own sweet experience, all the intercourses, written down in the Song of songs? What say you? Are you strangers to these things, and yet an espoused soul to Christ? that cannot be.

12. Have you not a respect to all his commandments, since you have resigned yourself wholly over to him, without reservation? Dare you contradict a known precept, and can you sacrilegiously cut and carve upon his letter-will, and put your own carnal glosses upon his clear commands, for your own worldly and carnal ends? And yet be saints! and lovers of Jesus! that is impossible.

13. Doth your goodness reach the saints, 'the excellent of the earth,' in whom is all your delight?

light? Is there any in your eyes, by a thousand degrees, so great as a saint? Is not a creature the more lovely, excellent, and esteemed in your eyes, the more wise he is, the more he is like the all-lovely Jesus? As for the several fancies of riches and honour, you value them not, these are not the things which heighten and depress persons in your account. But on the contrary, are you the people that esteem persons according to gay-clothing, heaps of trash, much of earthly honour, power, authority, and renown? Desire you more to have a really honourable consort, children, kinsmen, and friends, than to have them wise and holy? Art thou such a creature, that thou lovest the converse of the wealthy and prosperous; and canst take a worldling, known to be such, to be the inseparable companion of thy life, because of worldly advantages; and canst converse familiarly and merrily with worldlings, without any antipathy, or hurt to the frame of thine heart? Art thou such an one, and yet a saint? ah! poor thing, thou art a stranger to holiness. It may be thou art a formalist; that is, a person illuminated, who hath a custom of reading, and conferring, and meditating, and praying; and it may be, weeping, and hearing the best ministers, it may be with jeopardy; but the life and marrow of religion thou art altogether ignorant of.

14. Do not the affairs of Christ's church, through the world, and especially through the particular church he doth most own, lie nearer your heart than all other things? May you not say, 'If I forget thee, O Zion, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chiefeſt joy?' Are not your own affairs oft-times forgotten by you, you are so much taken

ken up with the affairs of Christ? That Christ may be great, his interests glorious, and his people exalted, is the flower and top of your desires. You are exceedingly angry against, not only his open persecuting enemies, but also against all who are indifferent or lukewarm in his matters; thou canst abide none but the zealous ones: art thou not, as it were, burnt up with zeal for the glory of the only excellent One? so that thou art crying out, 'Let the sinners be consumed from the earth; let the wicked be no more, let all his enemies perish; but let those that love him be like the sun going forth in his strength.' But, on the contrary, do thine own affairs share largest of thy thoughts? thou art oft-times so occupied with them, that the affairs of Zion are almost forgotten: it may be, thou wishest well unto her, and had rather she did swim than sink; yea, wouldst undergo a considerable loss, upon condition she might be exalted: but, wouldst thou have the affairs of Christ great, merely out of desire to his glory and exaltation? Dost thou desire the rising of his interests, tho' it were upon thy fall and ruin? Are thy great affairs, even what concerneth life, and the greatest affairs of thine own, small, and of no consideration in thine eyes, in comparison of the smallest things of Christ? Yea, art thou not one, who canst overlook, and cede many things to the enemy? Not an hoof, is too great preciousness to thee. And is not thy hatred and indignation at his enemies, weak and indiscernible? Thou canst hear his work and people spoken evil of unconcernedly, and be little or nothing moved: thou art a very meek and moderate man in his cause; and art thou one of his? Hath he the flower of thy love? Is that love

love burning in thine heart, ‘which many waters cannot quench?’ Art thou a genuine son of Zion? Never think it; poor deluded creature, thou hast religion yet to seek.

15. Do all earthly things appear dead and crucified unto thee? Dost thou look upon this earth as a melancholy wilderness, and hast thine heart and eyes still upon thy country? Yea, dost thou look with a disdainful eye upon this base world, so full of wickedness, vexation, and vanity, wherein thy Lord, and all his followers, have got so bad entertainment? But, on the contrary, dost thou look upon thine enjoyments, in a lovely and warmly manner, and hast sweeter, and more pleasant thoughts of them, than of the life to come? When the world smiles upon thee, dost thou smile upon it again; and canst easily bear the want of the full enjoyment of God; being so well pleased with an easy, earthly life, either in reality, or in imagination, as that thou art saying to thyself, ‘It is good to be here?’ Art thou thus, and yet a faint, a pilgrim, who is travelling heaven-ward, a creature whose heart and love is in another country, and not here? This is a repugnancy; never think it, man; think thyself the thing thou art, an home-born slave; and then thou art a step in the way to true liberty.

16. Art thou longing to be in the immediate embraces ‘of the Chief of ten thousand,’ to behold him face to face, and be satiated with his immediate fellowship? Is it often the cry of thy longing heart, ‘When shall I see him as he is,’ amidst that white and beautiful company following him whithersoever he goes? When shall I see the Bridegroom and the bride kiss and embrace one another? When shall he set his majestic head through

through these visible heavens, and appear in his royal marriage-robcs, before the whole creation ? Ah, the envious heavens, that hide him from my longing eyes ! Ah the tedious days, that lie betwixt me and him ! When shall we be eternally in others immediate embraces ? But, on the contrary, canst thou live contentedly, in the midst of earthly abundance, with small or no desires of his immediate fellowship ? Is this the ordinary frame of thy spirit, and yet a saint ? It cannot be. Can the chaste spouse not long for her absent bridegroom ? Can the true lover live patiently, without beholding the beloved's face ? Ah ! Sirs, you have not been really espoused to him. You have not received his love-tokens, nor been ravished with the smell of his fragrant ointments ; and what wonder that you are as you are ?

17. Are you depending on God in every thing ? Do you acknowledge him in all your ways, and in every exigency that befalls you ? 'Do you cast all your cares upon him, and trust in him' for all things in time and eternity ? So that you find your mind greatly eased, as having one for your Father who is both able and willing to carry you through all difficulties and afflictions ? Are you endeavouring to do his commandments, and to commit the event of all absolutely unto him, who, you know, brings all to a good issue ? Have you renounced the disposing of yourselves, and resigned that, with all your other concerns, even unto him ? and dare you not do any thing without his approbation ? Or, on the contrary, do you rely on this thing, and that thing ? If there be money in the purse, or calves in the stall, then you hope you shall not want ; you trust in human probabilities ; but if those fail you, you are despondent ; thou

thou hast not the confidence in God, that may hold up thy heart, in as cheerful a condition, as when corn and wine abounded unto worldlings; thou canst not lay as much weight on the large promises, contained in the book of God, as worldlings do on their charters, or earthly possessions; and therefore thou art ever anxious about the event, and committest not the disposing of thyself to him: thou walkest by the compass of riches, ease, reputation, &c.: and whether it be the will of Christ, is thy last consideration; whether it be a course that will most glorify him, and make thy progress swifter to glory, doth not so much trouble thee, as whether it be a course that will render thee prosperous, full of ease, wealth, and esteem in a world. Doth thine heart whisper thee, that such an occupation, such a marriage, or such an enterprize will bring in great wealth, much worldly joy, a multitude of friends, greater worldly honour, &c. and therefore that it is to be followed. Ah! deluded wretch, walkest thou by earthly, carnal rules; and yet such a noble creature as a saint? Never entertain such fancies: the saints walk as Christ walked, he is their Forerunner, and Captain.

The difference between a saint and a worldling, may, in some manner, be apprehended from what we have spoken. Ask seriously at yourselves such questions; reflect upon your way of walking; see what is the constant frame of your heart, and what your heart most delights in; what you have been, what you are aiming at, and seeking most; what you rejoice most in; what the thoughts and intentions of your heart run out most upon. O Sirs, be not beguiled in so weighty a concern: if you err here, you are eternally undone: it is

Satan's great endeavour to hinder you from considering yourself, or your condition; he delights to see you pass away your time in considering your natural abilities, your corporal endowments, your estate in the world, &c. But he is afraid lest you consider your spiritual estate, how it stands betwixt God and you; whether you be in friendly terms with him, or not; if not, how you may attain unto a near fellowship; and how you may keep yourself in his love and favour, and grow more and more familiar with him; he loves, and endeavours to divert your mind off from eternal concerns to temporal. But, Sirs, ought you not to give eternity the first place, the first, and flower, and choice, and might of all your endeavours? make sure work in so great, great a matter: thine eternal well, or wo, is upon the wheels, man; what shall be your lot throughout endless ages, is a concern above all that you can conceive, or endeavour. Knowest thou not how the matter stands? Is not the time short in which thou hast to prepare thyself? Is not thy life most uncertain? Is not the work of salvation a great, a long, a difficult work? Is it not most common, that men die as they live; and most certain, that their eternal condition is as they die? Knowest thou not, that it is written, 'To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts? Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' Come, O come, and embrace so friendly a call. Have you any excuse? Are you about any business of such importance? Is any succeeding hour better than the present? Doth not thine heart grow more hard? Why then, fall to work in good earnest, as for life and death: make sure work, build not upon sand, but upon the rock; never rest till you have

have Christ indeed, and not some fancy in his place; be sure that you get an interest in him: never think yourself right, until you have a familiar and lively 'fellowship with the Father and ' the Son;' until there be mutual communications of love betwixt Christ and you; until you have heartily, and for ever, given yourself wholly over to him, and taken him wholly over to you, to be your King, Priest, and Prophet, to be your all and only One; until you be enamoured with his matchless beauty, overcome with his inexpressible sweetness; until earth, in its best condition, be an empty nothing, and vanity in your eyes; until heaven become your native country, where heart, and love, and all do lie; so that it shall be as natural for you to be heavenly-minded, as for earth-worms to be earthly. O then! we shall greet you, by the excellent and princely name of saints. O then, you shall be no more beasts, but creatures of an high and seraphic nature, the sons and minions of the high and lofty One; the princes and heirs of heaven, and earth, and all things: for then 'all things are yours, whether ' Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or ' life, or death, or things present, or things to ' come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and ' Christ is God's.'

A soliloquy to God, in the form of Prayer.

Dispatch, O Wellbeloved, and hasten the day of our eternal marriage; put time and days out of the way: thou hast great things to do, before thou descendest visibly to this lower world: thou hast been making great dispatch since thou didst ascend; and still the nearer thy second coming,

ing, thou still hastenest thy work the more: these few years immediately preceding, how hast thou put many and great things through thy hand? and now thy kingdom is upon the advancing hand, tho' it seem almost all tottering and decaying. That great and glorious work which thou promisedſt of old, is just now in the birth, and near the breaking forth: thy grand enemies have begun to fall before thee, and have still lost ground; and tho' they now seem to have the advantage, it is but in appearance: thou art only making thyſelf to flee before them, that thou mayest draw them all out after thee; but ere ever they shall be aware, thou wilt make thine ambuscades to assault them in the rere, and in a trice thou wilt environ them on every ſide, and give them an irreparable rout. Thou art, O mighty Captain, as it were, retiring, that thou mayest come back upon thine enemies with the greater force: thou art ready to cry out, 'Ah! I will eafe me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: ' for behold, thou makeſt the earth empty, and ' makeſt it waste, and turneſt it up ſide down, ' and ſcattereſt abroad the inhabitants thereof; ' thou art coming out of thy place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; for ' thou ſhalt rise up, as in mount Perizzim, thou ſhalt be wroth, as in the valley of Gibeon; that thou mayſt do thy work, thy ſtrange work: and ' bring to paſſ thine act, thy ſtrange act. At the noise of the tumult, the people ſhall flee; at the lifting up of thyſelf, the nations ſhall be ſcattered, and their ſpoil ſhall be gathered, like the ſpoiling of the caterpillars; as the running to and fro of locuſts, ſo ſhalt thou run upon them; ' for thy ſword ſhall be bathed in heaven, it ſhall come

‘ come upon Idumea, and upon the people of thy curse, unto judgment: thy sword shall be filled with blood, and shall be made fat with fatness: for thou hast a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea; and the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks, with the bulls, and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness: for the day of vengeance is in thine heart, and the year of thy redeemed is come. Thou art looking, and there is none to help; and thou wondrest that there is none to uphold; therefore thine arm shall bring salvation unto thee, and thy fury it shall uphold thee; thou wilt put on righteousness as a breast-plate, as an helmet of salvation upon thine head: and thou shalt put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and shalt be clothed with zeal as a cloak, and thou wilt tread down the people in thine anger, and make them drunk in thy fury; and wilt bring down their strength to the earth. Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, meekness, and righteousness: and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things: be thou a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. When thou makest inquisition for blood, remember them: forget not the cry of the humble; that they may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: that thou mayst be known by the judgments thou executest, when the wicked is snared in the works of his own hands: let not the needy always be forgotten; O let not the expectation of the poor perish for ever. Arise, O Lord, let not

not man prevail; put thine enemies in fear, O Lord, that they may know themselves to be but men. Behold, they travail with iniquity, and have conceived mischief, and have brought forth falsehood: they have made a pit, and digged it; let them fall into the ditch which they have made: let their mischief return upon their own head, and their violent dealing come down upon their own pate. But those that trust in thee, let them rejoice, let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them. Even let the righteous rejoice, when he seeth the vengeance: let him wash his feet in the blood of the wicked: so that a man may say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily thou art a God that judgest in the earth. Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord; and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name. O deliver not the soul of thy turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked; forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever: have a respect unto thy covenant; for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. O let not the oppressed return ashamed; let the poor and needy praise thy name: forget not the voice of thine enemies; the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thine hidden ones: they have said, Come let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may no more be in remembrance; for they have consulted together, with one consent; they are confederate against thee. O make them like a wheel, O my God, as the stubble before the wind; that men may know that thou, whose name

name alone is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the earth. O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself: lift up thyself, thou Judge of the earth, render a reward to the proud. O Lord, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? how long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord, and afflict thine heritage: yet they say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. But thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to fayour her, yea, the set time is come; for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and fayour the dust thereof: for thy mercy is great above the heavens, and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and thy glory above all the earth: that thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand. Wilt thou not give us help from trouble? for vain is the help of man. Through thee we shall do valiantly; for thou art he that shall tread down our enemies. Our mouth shall be filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing: thou shalt put a new song in our mouth; each one of us shall sing forth, O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee; I will praise thy name, for thou hast done wonderful things, thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth: for thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm, and a shadow from the heat; when the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we

' we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.' I cannot but smile, and leap for joy, through the forethoughts of the glorious days we shall see a little hence. Verily, Wellbeloved, thou hast persuaded me with a strong hand, that the glory of the second temple shall far surpass the glory of the first; and that such a day of thy power and excellency shall arise very shortly upon Britain, as shall dazzle the eyes of all the beholders, as shall confound and put to shame all thine adversaries, as shall rejoice exceedingly the hearts of thy now faddened and fainting friends, and have a strong influence and resplendency throughout the whole earth. We are thy covenanted people, thine in a more peculiar manner than any people, nation, or language throughout the universal world; thy name is called most signally over us, thy glory and renown is most especially concerned in our affairs; greater mercy, power, wisdom, and sovereignty hast thou not manifested to any people, since thou didst ascend on high: how majestic and glorious have thy outgoings been among us? as if this had been the chief place of thy dwelling on earth. Such majestic banners of mercy and justice hast thou erected among us, as have amazed the nations round about us: and tho', ere it be long, thou wilt pour out our blood, like water, by the force of the sword, because of our horrid apostasies and inventions; yet 'thy loving-kindness thou shalt never remove from us,' but shalt erect a banner of love over us, until the day of thine appearance. Thou hast manifested, that

that thou art well pleased with thine espousing of us, and that thou standest to the bargain, by thy begetting a progeny of sons and daughters, which appear to exceed, in number and excellency, all others through the habitable world. Tho' our iniquities testify against us, and cry for utter desolation, until we be like Admah and Zeboim; yet, what wilt thou do for thy great name, which will be greatly blasphemed throughout the world, if thou utterly consume us? Hast thou begun a work; and shalt thou not perfect it? Hast thou laid the foundation; and shalt thou not build it up unto the cope-stone, that all may cry, Grace, grace unto it? Hast thou not ever frustrated the cruel and hellish plans of thine enemies, and made their devices to fall on their own heads; and shalt thou not now plunge them into the midst of their own mischiefs, so that the inhabitants of the world may cry out, Higgaion; Selah? Hast thou such a numerous and excellent remnant, according to the election of grace; and shall they not hold thee from removing altogether from hence; yea, so hold thee, as that thou shalt dwell most gloriously amongst us, and bless us with a double blessing? Art thou the hearer of prayer; and shall not the sighs and tears, and groans of thine afflicted, persecuted ones prevail strongly with thee? Are there not thousands of thousands of prayers lying before the throne, yet unanswered? How many strong wrestlers have prayed and wept for thy vindicating thy work and people, who died praying? Tho' sighs and tears did not move thee, yet wilt thou not regard the cry of the souls under the altar, who testified for the very smallest of thine interests unto the death? Is not thy kingdom now upon the advancing,

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and are not the glorious days at hand, which of old thou hast promised at the close of time? Anon, thou wilt tread upon the high places of the earth, and the inhabitants shall tremble, and be amazed: the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and thou alone shalt be exalted in that day. Thou art coming forth in great fury, and shalt tread the wine-press without the city, up to the horse bridles: and the carcases of the men of this generation shall be like dung upon the earth; for the sword shall devour from the one end of the land, even to the other; no flesh shall have peace, because the earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; since they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant: for, from the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet, unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely: they have healed the hurt of the daughter of thy people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace: they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men; they bend their tongues, like their bow, for lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth. Behold, thy whirlwind shall go forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind, it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. Thou hast not sent these prophets, yet they ran; thou hast not spoken to them, yet they prophesied; therefore wilt thou cast out the carcases of these prophets, and these to whom they have prophesied, into the streets, and the fields, to be devoured by the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field: for thou wilt cut off from this generation head and tail, branch and rush, in one day:

it shall be as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him: for wickedness burneth as the fire, it shall devour the briars and thorns, it shall kindle in the thickets of the forest; and they shall mount up, as the lifting up of smoke. Through thy wrath the land is darkened, and the people shall be the fewel of thy fire: no man shall spare his brother; they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm, Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, and they together shall be against Judah; and the streets shall be filled with blood, and the fields shall be soaked with blood and fatness; for it is the day of thy fury and revenge for the controversy of Zion: but yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten, as a tyle-tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves: for the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. And in that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely, for them that are escaped of Israel: and in that day shalt thou be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty unto the residue of thy people; and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment; and for strength to them who turn the battle to the gate. For thou in the midst of us art mighty; thou wilt save, thou wilt rejoice over us with joy; thou wilt rest in thy love; thou wilt rejoice over us with singing: and thou wilt gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, even them to whom the reproach of it was a burden; and thou

wilt create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud, and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence. Who is a God like unto thee; that pardonest iniquity, and passest by the transgression of the remnant of thine inheritance? Thou retainest not thine anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy. O may thou be glorious and exalted through Britain, and thro' the whole world! When shall the night be gone, and thou arise with healing under thy wings? When shalt thou pour down thy Spirit from on high, and make unto thyself a willing people? Hasten these days, for thine elect's sake; be an hiding-place to thy chosen, from the storm and tempest, and the blast of the terrible ones, according to thy promise: cover us with thy feathers, and under thy wings make us to trust: let thy truth be our shield and buckler. Then shall we not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day: a thousand shall fall at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand; but it shall not come near us; only with our eyes shall we behold, and see the reward of the wicked. O let us see the good of thy chosen, and rejoice with thy nation, and be glad with thy people: let us see good, according to the days wherein we have seen evil, and according to the days thou hast afflicted us. And perform thy great promises, now in the end of time and days. As thou hast already poured the vials of thy wrath on the seat of the beast: now, our mighty One, dry up the river, the great river; and let there come a great voice from the temple of heaven, from the throne, It is done: that thou mayst

mayst have a glorious church of Jews and Gentiles; such a day of thy power, and beauties of holiness, as that the clearest days we or our fathers ever saw, shall be but days of darkness and ignorance in comparison of them. Haste, O Wellbeloved, that thou mayst put an end to time and days, and become all in all unto thy chosen, throughout eternity.

The Dying SAINT's Song.

FAREWELL, you beauties of the lower story,
Of God's great all; adieu, you painted glory
Of silly earth; farewell, you dreams, you toys,
Cloth'd in the garb of true delights and joys:
Yet, were you such, as to the world you seem,
What place now can you have in mine esteem?
Since all you lesser beauties disappear,
In western point of my heart's hemisphere;
You rose, shone, set, yet shall you not again
Shine on my soul, while heav'n of heaven's remain:
No more shall painted loves my soul bereave,
No more shall glist'ring shades my mind deceive,
No more shall empty hopes cause discontent,
No more shall carking cares my soul torment;
No more shall pain cause me to groan and sob,
No more shall fears cause stifled heart to throb;
No more shall crackling joys my sp'rits exhal;
No more shall vain conceits my thoughts enthrall;
No more shall vain delights choke solid pleasure,
No more shall store of clay appear a treasure;
No more shall childish rage my blood inflame,
No more shall fond desires possess the same;
No more shall my conceptions be obscur'd,
No more shall my affections be obdur'd:
No more shall damps asleep my senses lull,
No more shall clubbish earth foul's actions dull;

No more shall sickness my clay-house possess,
 No more shall exercise cause weariness :
 No more shall silly body cause a loathing,
 No more shall't stand in need of food and clothing ;
 No more shall men contemn, if these fall low,
 No more shall men esteem, if these o'erflow :
 No more shall sin remain, source of all ill,
 No more shall sin man's glorious structure spill ;
 No more shall sin lodge near to heav'nly grace,
 No more shall sin eclipse Christ's lovely face :
 No more shall sin pull heart from things divine,
 No more shall sin my heart to earth incline.
 Wouldst thou, in short, express all said before ?
 Blest self, say, this, That sin shall be no more.
 Welcome, O gentle death, I think thy face
 Appears not grim, but hath a pleasant grace ;
 What tho' thy looks are ghostly, sad and sour
 Unto the wicked, whom thou dost devour ?
 Not so to us, servants cannot appal ;
 For ours are death, life, heav'n and earth, and all :
 First sight of thee, friend death, caus'd languid heart
 Leap for exceeding joy, and ev'ry part
 To spring with floods of pleasure ; I was slain
 With sad delays, but am reviv'd again :
 I'll no more call thee death, but life ; I find
 In thee, not death's but life's symptoms combin'd.
 True, death thou art unto the wretched band,
 Stark dead in sin, and under thy command.
 O but all things have chang'd their kind and face
 Unto the sons of light, and life, and grace !
 Sweet Christ hath turn'd for us, all blacks to white,
 All woes to joys, all sadness to delight :
 He past the lists with foes, and gave the foil,
 And made all foes to friendship back recoil.
 With thee, O death, he grappled hand-to hand,
 And led thee captive from thy native land :

Now

Now thou art tam'd, and lost thy fatal sting ;
 Foes without harm can no disaster bring.
 Enter this heart, friend death, and thou shall hear
 Thy praises sung, with a melodious cheer.

O sweet beginner of all joys and pleasure,
 Of all content, and fulness passing measure !
 O joyful ev'ning-period, without morrow,
 O wants, and pains, and tears, and griefs, and sor-
 And, which is most, O blessed utmost border (row !
 Of all corruption, finning and disorder !
 Once past this march, I may with boldness cry,
 All sin is gone, adieu all misery.
 O safe refuge ! O sweet eternal port !
 To which all weary'd pilgrims do resort.
 O silver stream ! O pleasant passing strand
 From clownish earth, to fair Immanuel's land !
 O gladsome boatman ! giving safe convoy
 From weeping earth, unto the land of joy.
 O quiet sleep ! which weary'd sense assails,
 And sp'rits and pow'rs with sweet immortal gales.
 O just umpire, which doth the march descry
 Of flying time, and vast eternity.
 O skilful sower of earth's mortal grain !
 That it in heav'nly glore may rise again,
 O noble usher, who by th' hand dost bring
 Us to the hall of the immortal King.
 Would I thy praises in one word express ?
 I'll only say, O source of happiness !
 From thee did never-fading glory grow :
 From thee did ever-blooming joy o'erflow :
 By thee eternal death was vanquished,
 By thee eternal life did it succeed.
 O strange ! the Source of life did purchase more,
 By dying than all creatures lost before :
 Yea, more by infinite transcendent stages,
 Than can be told through endless store of ages.

By

By thee the saints their heritage possess:
By thee earth's too too num'rous folks decrease.
Thou art more mild, of a more pleasant nature,
In these last ages of the lower creature,
Than in the first, when thou did suffer men
To run a longsome race of sin and pain.
O! without thee our strongest hope would fail,
Our joys would die, despair would us affail.
The thoughts of thee brought to my heart relief,
In all my wand'rings through the vale of grief:
Indeed my longing soul was sore oppress'd
With sad delays, when thou seem'd not to haste
Thy wished course, and to forget thy call:
Now, now thy coming hath redressed all.
O now my heart's rejoic'd! sweet death and I
Are in each other's arms; thrice happily,
I bravely fly out o'er the march of time,
Unto that happy, happy, glorious clime:
Where stored are enduring boundless treasure
Of loves, and joys, and heart contenting pleasures.
All joy, death's shady vale, in drawing near
Thy dark'ned borders, strange! thou dost appear
Another thing than what I did conceive:
Mistakes cause needless fears, and joys bereave:
Thee did my thoughts present an ugly den,
O'erspread with horror, sadness, fear, and pain.
Sight tells the truth. O thrice delightsome place!
Stor'd with refreshing shades of sweet solace,
Cast by these stately trees of fragrant fume,
Which do o'erspread this true Elysium,
And do aorn this trance, which pilgrims brings
Into the paradise, which ever springs.
Now do I set my feet within this vale,
What gales of joys are these, which me affail
In this first entry? O this grave might be
A rayishing repose through all eternity!

All here do laugh and smile, and spring and sing;
 Were sadness here, it could not sadness bring:
 Were placed here all griefs and woes of creatures,
 Would they not change unto melodious natures?

And can, O fairest One, thy word command
 Death's saddest vale unto a joyful land?
 How doth the place, where thou dost ever dwell,
 In glory, beauty, and all things excel?

But what if this be it? O heavenly frame!
 My mind's enlarg'd, my heart is in a flame!
 O sweet aspects! with what a pleasant grace
 Do heav'nly hosts surround me, in this place?

I'm ravish'd with the raiment of that One,
 Whose fragrancy transcendeth Lebanon:
 His voice, his soul-transporting emanation
 Strikes me in an eternal admiration!

No, this is glory's port, I see the hall,
 Where lovely Christ, with crown in hand, doth call,

Come, come, my fair, thy princely head I'll crown
 With these great bays of glory and renown;
 I'll thee adorn, in such a brave attire,
 That all, who thee behold shall thee admire.

O love, thou ever hast been in my sight,
 A mass of beauty, sweetness and delight;
 But now, my fair, I'll thee so beautify
 With the resplendent rays of majesty,

And passing glory's beauty; I'll so fill,
 With store of heav'nly grace; thy mind and will,
 And all thy pow'rs; thy glore so flourish shall,
 And bloom, and shine and ray, through ages all,
 That most envying seers shall confess,
 Thou art a mirrour of all happiness.

O hast thou fought thy foes, and vanquished,
 By off'ring vi'lence unto all, who did
 Thy course to heav'n oppose? And shall not I
 Put in thine hands these palms of victory?

O! didst thou gladly suffer, and despise
 All losses, pains, and woes, that did arise
 For my name's sake, O love? And shall not I
 Cause thee to reign in glorious majesty?
 Waft thou to all created things deny'd,
 Esteeming them but dross and dung, and ey'd
 Me as the only One? And shall not I
 Thee with my matchless beauty satisfy?
 O! hast thou bid farewell, for evermore,
 To earthly things, which thou enjoy'd before,
 That thou might'st come to me? And shall not I
 Give full enjoyment through eternity?
 O then, arise, my fair, and come away;
 Behold, the eastern beams of this fair day
 Of vast eternity dart in thy face;
 Causing all shades retreat and flee apace.
 O come, and enter this thrice happy place,
 Thou now behold'st. What ravishing solace
 Dwells here! what passing joys! what boundless
 pleasures
 Flow in this land, like fountains, floods and rivers!
 Nay, nothing here but sweetness! ev'ry part
 Is fill'd with all delights of mind and heart:
 Here ev'ry ray's a white and joyful day;
 Here ev'ry bloom's a fragrant smelling May:
 If once thou enter here, thy rain is gone,
 Thy winter's past, and all thy woes are done
 This is the holy place, within the vail,
 Wherein once ent'red, shalt for ever dwell:
 This is the place of old I did prepare
 To be the stage, whereon I might declare
 My beauty, glory, and excellency,
 Before this glorious, stately company
 Of men and angels, who shall see my face,
 And shall for ever in my sight find grace:
 Lo, here, below these rosy, fragrant groves,
 We'll satiate ourselves with mutual loves.

O! here our blessedness shall bloom for ay!
Arise, my love, my fair, and come away.

Thus speaks my Lord, this is his invitation,
Thus sounds his voice; O endless admiration!
Transporting all: O fires dart from above,
Transforming all into a flame of love!
His soul alluring voice, his heav'nly grace,
That shines in ev'ry look, his fairest face,
His lovely eyes his countenance divine
Hath ravish'd quite away this heart of mine:
At first aspect his shade, a draught might prove,
Would quite eclipse ten thousand worlds of love.
Thrice blessed saints, thrice blessed angels, you
Who stand within the near immediate view
Of such an One, all in your proper places,
Encircled with essential love's embraces!
'Tis like two heavens of joy, to think upon,
That I shall be within these arms anon!
More solid joy the hope of glory brings,
Than all enjoyments of created things.

LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

Mr ANDREW WELWOOD from London, a little
before his death,

I. A Letter to his Mother.

Dear Mother,

London.

IF I were able to dictate now, when I am entering into eternity, I could tell you the consolations wherewith I am comforted of God, even when the chiefest delights of the world, these trifles upon which the sons of men dote, can be no comfort to me. Alas! what are all the comforts that flee away at death? Even the vanities of time, which cannot convoy a man without the borders of time; and far less endure with him through eternity. My death would seem judicial like to blind worldlings, who see no judgment, but to be deprived of the empty and tasteless vanities of time; but I see that 'all things work together for good to them who are the called according to his purpose:' even difficulties, temptations, griefs, and woes, have all an happy end to the godly: 'Out of the eater cometh meat, and out of the strong cometh sweetnes:' so, even eating and consuming griefs, sickness, and losses, which make the outward man decay, renew the inward man, and make him flourish; even the strongest difficulties, temptations, and foes, when overcome, yield the sweetest victory: and the thoughts of having rushed through so many enemies, and so strong, will be sweet throughout eternity.

ternity. I see clearly, that all the steps of divine providence toward me, have conspired to a blessed close; even the most difficult of them, especially this half-year: I would not, for ever so much, but that I die where I die, and am sick in this place; for his dispensations have a wonderful depth in them, and cannot well be discerned, but by eyes enlightened from above. But worldlings are blind, and vary strangely in their judgment of things; and even the saints, while here, are much blinded with sin and infirmities of this overpowering mortality. Death has indeed a terrible face to these that place all their happiness in this life; but I fear it not; it is not death, but an harbinger of glory unto me: it is an hard-favoured messenger sent from my sweet Lord to me; it is a dark and sad chariot carrying to the land of light and joy. My Lord hath done to me, what he hath determined from eternity; and all his purposes, even all the thoughts of his heart, are full of love, infinite love, to those that wait upon him. I resolved to glorify him on earth, and dedicated my life wholly to my Lord's service; and I know it is all one with him, as if I had done it: and I shall, in another manner, exalt and serve him above, than I could have done here below, encumbered with mortality, and with innumerable infirmities. My Lord hath said to me, it would weary thee to stay too long in this valley of tears and misery: I take it, as if thou hadst done me many years service: I have abridged thy days, but not thy life: I have shortened thy toil, but not thy reward. And O what a blessed thing it is, that he takes the task of many weary years service from off my hand! My warfare is ended; O the joyful change I am undergoing! when shall

Shall I see him as he is? when shall I get my fill of lovely Jesus? O his beauty, his beauty, his beauty! Men and angels may admire the freeness of his grace, and admire it, and ever admire it! but what can they say, or comprehend of it? O the freeness of his grace! that he should admit the like of me to stand eternally before him, and to be for ever in his presence; to be one of his honourable train; nay, to enjoy him, as near as can be. O think ye, I lose any thing, who get the fore-start, and become possessor of that inheritance? the inheritance of many a more excellent and ancient saint than I; nay, the inheritance of the Heir of all things? It is little of heaven I know, being obscured with mortality, and living by faith, and not by sight: but O to think of the expressions of scripture concerning it! 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for those that love him:' if heaven could be conceived by us, I should not so much esteem it. But O it is a massy thing! O strange! that God should make bits of mortal men (and what a poor worthless thing man is, let any behold in a dying and dead carcase) not only as happy as we can desire, or conceive, but as happy as can be! O to behold the face of the Ancient of days! But I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to present me spotless before the Father, with exceeding great joy. If I perish, let him see to his promise; I have laid all upon him: If I perish, (through the strength of my Lord, by whom I can do all things,) I shall perish believing. I expect much of heaven, more than I can conceive; but O I think I shall be exceedingly deceived, (O sweet deceit!) for I shall find more than

than ten thousand worlds can comprehend. I shall see my Father ere long: many sweet days have he and I had upon earth, many innumerable ages shall we have in heaven together. O heaven! O the difference betwixt this melancholy, smoky inn, and the magnificent hall of glory! O the change I am undergoing! I go from the twilight of the sun and moon, to the noon-day of the splendor of glory; from a dunghill, to a throne; from bodily infirmities, distresses, diseases, and pains, to a land, whose inhabitants do not say, I am sick; from wearisome labour and toiling, into an inconceivable sweet paradise, where I shall rest for evermore; from a mortal company, to an innumerable immortal 'company of angels, to the general assembly, and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven; and to God the 'Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.' O what think ye, to be eternally, even for ever and ever, among such sweet company? Are there any more honourable, and amiable company, than they? O what shall I say? what shall I think? that filthy, and unworthy I should shew my face among so glorious an assembly. What is here, but vanity and grief of heart? O do you not long to be gone, to be in that sweet and inconceivable paradise? Cast your anchor within the vail, and then you need not fear death, come when it will. But, O long life, or death rather! for the sooner we arrive at our journey's end, the better, and the longer we are clogged with sin and misery, the worse; for the more we will love to linger in this Sodom. It is hard to get our hearts drawn quite off time; we look kindly to the bastard's inheritance; and therefore we abhor

abhor death, and can be contented to want heaven longer than any thing else: but if we could get a sight of the King in his beauty, and of the land that is afar off; then, O to be gone! O to be up above these yisible heavens, and amongst these glistering companies, who enjoy him to the full! O if man knew how vain a world this is! O but they are happy, and inconceivably happy, who escape fairly the temptations, snares, and difficulties that are in this valley of tears, and who are fairly landed on that odoriferous, flowery land, on that ravishing land, which infinite and eternal love did contrive to be the royal theatre, whereon should be shown, to men and angels, the 'height and breadth, the depth and length, of 'that love that passeth understanding.' If you run fast, you cannot be long behind me; and we shall see one another immediately; death is no separation to the saints; for time is nothing: what is it to them who are to dwell eternally together, to be separated for a few hours? What is transient time to a never-ending eternity of joys? Death is far mistaken by the most part of saints, they have a wrong conception of it; it is a sweet repose to a weary soul, and looseth the soul from the bands of mortality, letting it out from a filthy, stinking prison, unto the sweet and fragrant air of glory; it ends all sorrows and sighings, and begins unspeakable joys: it is but a dark cloud ushering in the bright dawning of eternal glory. O but my Lord hath excellently circumstantiated my death! O I admire his love! I could tell many sweet passages of providences he hath casten in my way: but I delay, until I be fitting upon the brink of the river of life; and then I shall number them. I cannot now praise him;

alas that I am so stupid and dull; but I shall praise him anon; I shall eternally praise him! 'O be glad and rejoice in our God!' O sweet! that poor dying, miserable I was not left to uncertainties, not to know what to do; but to have such a sweet and kind Lord to repose on! Had I stayed longer in this wretched life, I was resolved to have shewn myself as faithful to you as I could: but I commit you unto his grace, who hath cared for me, even unto death; commit yourself to him, he will bring all to a good issue that is trusted to him. We are not our own; therefore we are not to dispose of ourselves. Christ is a good tutor and governor, and carries all these well through, that commit themselves to him. See that Mary neglect not to seek God, to pray, and read the scriptures; let her not frequent ill company. O the worth of a soul! and the reward of these that are instrumental in gaining of a soul! our bodies must go to the dust; but our souls are of more worth than ten thousand worlds. I am not able to say more, I am so weak. O! run fast, death is at the door. We are all stepping into eternity; what is time, but a preparation for it? Overlook time, and live, die daily, as one that must pass away immediately, and never be here any more. They build castles in the air, who imagine they shall find any rest here: let worldlings dream of rest on earth; ours is above; our hearts are gone; and we are dead to the world. Farewell for a few days. These are the words of,

Your dying Son,

A. Welwood.

II. A Letter to his Brother JAMES.

Dear Brother,

I hope, the last words of your brother, who is now stepping into eternity, will have some weight with you; and that this consideration will make you not to neglect them. Know you why you came into the world? I am sure, and you are as sure, not to eat, and drink, and pass away your time in earthly business; but to get the work of your salvation well wrought and finished, before death assault you: it is most uncertain, and steals upon men, as a thief in the night, when they are secure, never dreaming of such a great change: though truly my gracious Lord lets me see death still approaching nearer and nearer, that I may draw ever nearer and nearer to him who is life. O it concerns you to try, Whether you shall be a base miscreant, crawling in the bottomless pit with unspeakable torments, in the midst of wicked men and devils, blaspheming JEHOVAH and the Lamb to eternity; or, a glorious saint, conformed unto the image of the Son of the eternal God, loving, praising, and adoring him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb, for ever and ever. Consider what I say, the business is so weighty, so exceeding weighty, that time, with all its well and wo, is to be overlooked in comparison of this absolutely and only necessary thing: I tell you, there is an absolute necessity that you be holy; (let not the poor name affright you, for holiness is the sweetest and most easy thing in the world to them that are holy;) for, 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord:' and salvation must be nearer your heart, by many degrees, than all other concerns,

cerns, tho' they were ten thousand worlds. You must know the bargain of the new covenant, and close heartily with it, in all its fulness, without the least reservation: upon it, I recommend unto you Mr Guthrie's trial of a saving interest in Christ; and desire you to read it, till you become such an one as he describes. Believe it, 'Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.' Tho' it may seem troublesome in the beginning, and tho' Christ's sweet and easy yoke may seem an hard wreath; yet, believe me, there is nothing in the world but it which can give rest, and full satisfaction to the soul: all things here are unsatisfying, tho' you had all that you can desire of them. O this is a vain world! these who are near eternity will say so. O the vast difference betwixt time and eternity! I assure you, if you had all that your heart could wish, or desire of the pomp, treasures, and pleasures of time, you would find no contentment in them: and when you shall be in such a condition as I am in, when pale death, shall be staring you in the face; then all the glory of time will be, in your eyes, nothing but a withered flower. But alas! we are drunk with this world; and we never know well what we are doing, till death make us sober. I must say again, and again, O the difference betwixt time and eternity! they that get heaven, can get no more; for, alas! what are all additions of time? What is a few days eating, and drinking, and trifling? yea, what are all the massy exercisef of time, compared with the exercisef of glory? We place too much of our happiness in this side of time, and therefore death is a great disappointment: but we should be indifferent to all things in time, and

have our eyes ever fixed upon the thoughts of eternity. Then it is not at all to be regarded, in what time of a man's life he die, if he die in the Lord: yea, it is an invaluable blessing for the prisoner, or weary pilgrim, to have all his toil at an end, and to reach his native soil. You may think, I put a hard task upon you; because our nature is all polluted, and we are accustomed to do evil: but the ways of holiness are sweet, and all its paths are peace: if you were once acquainted with the ways of it, you would say, that sin is the most base and vile thing in the world: and that holiness is the most noble ornament. And consider this, the more you set your mind on holiness, the more sweet and easy you will find it. As for temporary things, take no care for them; they are but additions to the son's inheritance. I may say by experience, he hath made good his word to me in all these things of time; he hath made it good unto the end of my race, in a most strange and wonderful way: so that I have tasted more of my Lord's goodness, and wonderful providence, in this last half-year of my life, than in many years before: I think it a merciful dispensation, that he hath weaned my heart from the world, more in this half-year's sickness, than in many years health: this whole half-year of my life hath been a continual winter, for bearing down my corruptions, both original and actual: and now the world hath no relish to me. Farewell, vain world, I heartily submit unto death, if it were for no more but because it is the good pleasure of my Lord, who most mercifully takes me away from the bondage of my corruption, and from the dreadful evils to come. Meditate seriously on death: it is a business most weighty, a business upon

upon which your eternal well or wo depends: the end crowns the work; die well, and you are well, even well for evermore. And O! is not Evermore a massy word? You shall find death easy, if you be a diligent seeker of God in your life time: if otherwise, you shall find it the sorest battle that ever you fought; and you shall quake, when you shall hear an avenging God speaking audibly in your conscience, 'He is not mine, take his evil soul, devils, pull him to pieces, and hale him away to utter darknes': the poor soul wrestles in vain, but an avenging God leaves it for a prey to devils. Look not on death as afar off: little will be the difference betwixt my death and yours. This generation will quickly be gone: time is a glistering star, appearing something before hand, but indeed it is a transient nothing. And one that dies at sixty years of age, and another that dies at twenty years, think both alike, their bypast time is a dream. Short, or long time is not to be regarded, but in preparation to eternity: and he that is prepared, hath lived long enough. I could give you many instructions, were I not very weak: beware of ill company, never think to see God, if you walk with ill company: companions in time, are companions in eternity. Lay some vows upon yourself; but remember this, that you vow to do nothing in your own strength; for you shall find, that when you are weakest in your own eyes, then you are strongest: I say, lay some vows upon yourself, as to pray thrice a-day seriously and conscientiously; to read so much scripture; and to meditate. Not that men are tied to particular times, but it is most profitable to lay bands upon our loose corruptions, which else will plead for too much liberty.

berty. Imagine not your thoughts to be free; vain thoughts are the source of vain words, and unprofitable actions; the mind is the spring of all. Beware of the sins of the time, as you would shun the terrible judgments that threaten an apostate generation: the pastors are become brutish, they are 'sons of Belial, and know not the Lord; therefore they who hear them, are partakers of their abominations, I need say no more. You never have rightly sought God, until it be your chief delight to seek him; therefore never rest till you can say, 'I will go to God, my chiefest joy.' O then you are as happy as God can make you, (to speak so, with reverence to that 'high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity:' and can you be more happy? I take to witness against you, your own conscience, and the great Judge of the quick and the dead, That, if you continue in any vain imagination, 'living without God in the world, neglecting so great a salvation, you are a trampler under foot of the blood of the covenant,' and a despiser of all admonitions: but all this will do little, until he, who made heaven and earth, regenerate you. It may be he will hedge up your way on every side by affliction, that you may be constrained to flee unto him, who is a 'present help in time of trouble.' This, if you follow it, is the best legacy I could have left you; for if you knew the danger of the pelf of this world, a little of it would suffice, I would not for a world, that I had been born to be rich: the lighter burdened with thick clay, the better; it is hard to get up the mount, though ye had but a very small weight upon your back: for our corruptions are weighty enough without any addition. If you neglect that, which not I, but Christ commands

commands you, farewell for ever. If you obey, farewell for a few days; and then you and I shall meet in the only paradise, the flower of the whole creation: we shall sit down upon the flowery banks of the river of life, and ravish ourselves for ever and ever, with everlasting and unspeakable joys. This is from,

Your dying brother,

A. Welwood.

III. A Letter to his Sister HELEN.

Dear Sister,

I Am sorry I did not write sooner, before my strength and speech did fail; but I would be glad to spend my last breath upon you, if I could do you any good. I cannot forget you, even when I have forgotten the vanities of the world; you are precious unto me, since I knew you to be in some measure a seeker of God. O what advantages there are in seeking of him! I defy men and angels to number and comprehend them: endless eternity shall be short enough to lay open the inconceivable gains of godliness. If you seek him diligently, sincerely, and constantly, you shall have all things: and O is not that a vast word, *all things*? All shall be 'yours, whither the world, life, ' or death, things present, or things to come;' all these shall be yours, even the great All, and whatsoever is his. O but the saints have a long, large, and full charter! if you had a charter for many lands, it were but a narrow thing: but now every place where you tread on is yours; and what can you desire more? Behold the heaven, and consider

der even the heaven of heavens, for these are yours: is it possible, that a saint, the heir of all things, and joint-heir with the Son of the Eternal; is it possible, I say, that he can want any thing? Nay, the great Eternal, the Maker of all things, he is yours; and what can you desire more? Is it possible, that a saint can want any thing, whither spiritual or temporal? I mean any thing that is good for him: and God alone knows what is best for us. When I look through the passages of my life, I see that my Lord and guide hath led me in the best way; and these have been the sweetest dispensations, which crossed most my natural disposition; and which seemed most judgment like to carnal eyes. We are like ignorant children, that have no judgment to make choice of things; but would swallow down sweet poison, and give away a rich inheritance for painted trifles. No wonder then, if the world shew themselves to be fools and mad-men in their choice. My life hath been but a track of afflictions, and I would not for a thousand worlds it had been otherwise: tho' my old man desired still to be swimming in the ease and vanities of the world; yet I see my Lord hath been kindest, when I esteemed him most cruel. The last part of my life may seem judgment-like: but O you would wonder, if you knew what I know, and what my Lord hath done for me, in this last half year of my life, both as to things temporal and spiritual: I cannot understand them now, but I shall very shortly; and they shall be to me matter of eternal praise. Though I had abounded with all the ease, delights, pomp, glory, and riches of time; yet would I be glad to die, to leave the puddle of swinish pleasures, and drink of the pure river of everlasting joys, that floweth

floweth from beneath the throne of God. This world quite mistakes death: O who would not willingly leave such a vain perishing world! wherein we are still dishonouring our God! a world wherein the saints get bad entertainment; a world wherein the Lord of glory was, and is daily, crucified. What is here? All the glory and excellency of the creation is above; a few imperfect saints are only here. But it is above, where I shall see and embrace all these worthies, the courtiers of the King of glory. You need not be sad for my death; and will not if you post hard after me, and follow on to know the Lord; for time is just nothing. We shall be glad and rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, throughout all eternity, in that land of glory, and inconceivable joys. O if you knew but a little of the excellency of that land of blessedness! you would in a manner envy those who go before you; tho' you should pass ever so many sweet days, ere you can get thither, you would weary. For yourself, you are yet in an hell of sorrow and sin, while out of heaven, and while they are in an heaven of joy and pleasure. O! beware of worldly-mindedness, and carking cares; commit all to your Father: 'Seek first the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof; and then all other things shall be added unto you. Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:' and he that gives heaven, will give as much earth, as will suffice you; and more than is sufficient, is a heavy weight, that will pull you down the mount. O mark this! 'He that gave his only begotten Son, out of his bosom, to be tormented unto death for you; will he not also with him freely give you all things?' even every thing that pertains to life

and godliness. As for things temporal, the less of the world the better: all the saints will testify it, at least when they are about to leave it: I can put my seal to it now, when I am entering into eternity, that it is most dangerous to be intangled either with riches, honours, or pleasures; and that it is the sweetest dispensation to be afflicted, and cut short of them: for prosperity is the enemy of a life of godliness; as the experience of many a deceived professor may testify; who seemed to be something, when afflicted, but when once they got the bag, betrayed Christ. It is hard for a 'camel to go through a needle's eye:' the more we are inveigled with this deceitful world, the less do we value heaven: now nothing more glews a man's heart to the earth, than riches, which have weighed many a man down to the pit; where he is weeping and gnashing his teeth, cursing riches, and tormenting himself, that ever he desired them: whereas, if he had been poor, he would have been now (as men may conjecture) rejoicing amongst these glorified ones. Remember, that it is utterly impossible to serve God and mammon. And if your treasure be not in heaven, neither will your heart be there. I bless my Lord for mine afflictions, (which have been still greater and greater, till now that I am leaving them all,) as much as for any mercy I ever received, for now I reap the peaceable fruits of righteousness. And tho' I be now weeping, while I sow; yet shortly I shall have as much as I can bear of the massy sheaves of inconceivable glory. 'Weep and howl, ye rich men, for your misery that shall come upon you; for you now receive your good things, and the saints their evil things; therefore immediately shall ye be afflicted and tormented, and then shall they

‘ they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that mourn now, for they shall be comforted.’ The saints weep, while the world rejoiceth: but our sorrow shall be turned into joy, and their mad mirth into unspeakable and eternal horror. O if men did consider this, they would not toil for the ease and pleasures of sin, which are but for a moment; nor would they envy the rich gluttons, but rather the poor Lazarus’s, who are despicable in the eyes of all. Fret not, when you see the wicked prosper; nor repine at poverty, shame, and contempt; since the only excellent ones, ‘ of whom the world was not worthy, wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, and tormented:’ and the honourable apostles, and followers of the Lamb, were accounted the offscourings of all things. O if the saints would take time, sit down and consider these things! they would find it sweet to be conformed, in sufferings, to their Lord, ‘ who was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:’ that they might also be conformed to him in glory. I fear earthly-mindedness may be your predominant; therefore strive most against it: for how can one set their heart upon trash, and earnestly desire it, and heaven also? I tell you, the only way to have as much of the world, as is necessary and good for you, is to commit your temporal lot wholly to Christ, without the least reservation: this is best; for nothing can be committed to him, and go wrong: try him, and if you do not find, that he will carry you well through, so that you shall lack nothing that is good for you, then call him a liar: yet never any of the saints could say, that he failed them in a jot of what he promised them. And how great are his promises? as you

will find in scripture: they are all comprehended in this, 'The Lord is a sun and shield, he will give grace and glory: and no good thing will he with-hold from them that love him, and walk uprightly.' Trust all to him; for whether should you, or he, tutor yourself? Which of you is wifest? Cast all upon him, to the least bit of bread; and ye shall find great ease. They are miserable, who must care for themselves, and what concerns them, and have not a God to run to, on whom they may lay themselves and all their burdens. O learn to trust in God for all things, temporal and eternal: it is an hid mystery to many saints, in many things, especially, to trust against sense, to hope against hope; when there is no human probability, to rely upon the bare word of him who is true, is a difficulty; where his providence seems to contradict his promises, or to make his promise a liar. But will you trust him for heaven, and not for a moment of time? think you that he will with-hold journey-bread, if you be a traveller to the higher Canaan? It were a great absurdity, to command any to go a journey, and not to give what is necessary for it. Go on to heaven, hold your face still thitherward, and Christ will still be supplying all your wants: indeed he will not satisfy your carnal disposition, nor give you more than a pilgrim needs; so that you should forget the race set before you, by being intangled with a number of superfluities. I would say more, if breath and strength would permit: you know not what a world you are in; it is full of snares and difficulties. You will find it hard to keep clean garments, unless you commit yourself unto him, who can carry you, as with eagles wings; and strengthen and support you, when

when you are ready to fall. Tho' you should be the precipit of all round about you, you will find all little enough when you come to death: O death is a weighty business! You have scarce time to prepare for it: all our time is little enough for preparation; though we should deny ourselves our indifferent earthly exercises. What need have we then to beware of passing our time vainly? Every moment of it, is precious, as having a relation to eternity. O eternity! eternity! get some sight of it, and your thoughts will be wonderfully changed: for I tell you, could you get a glimpse of that maffy thing, called eternity, all the things in time would be no more in your eyes, than a childish toy, in the eyes of a man. Even the world decked in its best robes, seem such a poor thing to me, that I would not be at the pains to stretch out my hand, if I had it for the taking up; and such will it seem ere long to many. Worldlings are but beasts; and the richest and most flourishing of them, could you see them with my eyes, are but mean dunghill-worms; their meditations cannot flee over time. Then look upon the world, as mad, they know not what they are doing; they value only time, and yet they know not how to get it passed away. Be a great reader of the scriptures; for there you will find instruction, to make you wise to salvation; and thereby you may guide your steps warily, in an evil time; there you shall find threatenings to rouse you up; and promises to comfort and sustain you in the saddest of conditions. Reverence the ordinances administered by faithful pastors; for they are the ambaffadors of the Lord, our King: but abhor false prophets, which lead men into destruction. Alas! that there should be any of Christ's servants, who give an ill example,

example to these that are simple, counselling them, by their practice, to follow thieves and robbers; whose voice Christ's sheep will not hear. Set, at least, three times a day apart for prayer; for when we neglect that, our hearts are cold all the day long; and then we are easily ensnared with any temptation we meet with. Sometimes meditate, and consider yourself and others; that so you may not go on in your journey, like the world, who never ponder their way, but are led to destruction by their earthly desires, rushing into it, as horses to the battle. What have you to do here but to mind salvation? Consider this; for death will strip you naked of all earthly things; but choose the 'one thing needful, that shall never be taken away.' Remember then, that all things here are subordinate to salvation: our time is short and uncertain, we flee away. Death will be upon you ere you be aware; it surpriseth alike all ages, young and old: choose you, whether you will have death sweet or bitter. For my part, I fear not death; my Lord hath said to me, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' O who would not go hence! if it were but to stand at one of the gates of the golden city, and see the Lord, with all the ransomed ones, the noble company of priests and kings, standing round about the Lamb, crowned with honour and glory? One hour of heaven, yea, one sight of the face of the Ancient of days, would do more than make up for all the bitter afflictions I have swummed through in time: nay, I think the very forethoughts of glory, do already swallow up all the impressions of the tribulations of time that have seized on me: they are nothing now; they are gone, and shall never return again; yea, they are as if they had not been.

This

This shall be matter of high praises, through an endless eternity, for evermore. O vast eternity! but O silly time! no wonder that Paul said, 'We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen, are temporal, but the things that are not seen, are eternal;' the things that are seen, were not from eternity, neither shall they be to eternity. O then overlook them: close your eyes, as it were, upon them, and you shall see strange sights, which will make your course to glory, swift and cheerful. O what think you of Christ? Is there any like unto him? is there any but he? If you have him, you have all things: his worth cannot be told. What think you of it, to be saved from everlasting burnings? What think you of it, that sinful wretched we, should be as happy as can be? even eternally and inconceivably happy! and all this purchased by the death and blood of our kindest Lord Jesuſ? O who would not love such an one? Surely, it is impossible to know him aright, and not to love him; he is the ravishment of men and angels. Uncreated glory shines through the vail of his human nature; we cannot enjoy God more sweetly, familiarly, and fully, than through him: he is the blessed Day's-man betwixt God and man; the man Christ Jesuſ; I wish I could declare him evermore; but my last words, tho' they were fewer, may have a strong impression upon you: run fast, lose not the crown; heaven is well worth an inch of time's running. Cross corrupt nature's disposition; as you sow, so shall you reap; and consider, that death will teach you, that all that you do is fruitless, which tends not to the great salvation: all other mercies are not worth, in comparison of this great salvation;

and

and a short time will spend them all: but this shall endure for evermore. O but the news of heaven, such a sweet heaven to weary pilgrims, such a ravishing paradise, to these that are in this smoky dunghill are agreeable; I say, they are the greatest news that can be! and this whispered in your ears, 'Run, for you shall have the crown,' is another kind of news, than Run, and you shall have riches, honour, and pleasures. Bless him at all times, who hath disposed your lot so, that these only great things have taken you by the heart. Be not weary in well doing; for 'in due time you shall reap, if you faint not;' and we shall see one another shortly, in the midst of such joys, as the tongues of men and angels cannot in the least express; therefore you have no cause of sadness, but of rejoicing, that you have another friend gone before you, who will welcome you shortly into the joy of your Lord. Grace be with you. Account it all one, as if I had spoken all this to you face to face. These are the words of,

Your dying brother,

A. Welwood.

IV. A Letter to his Cousin THOMAS WELWOOD

My Dear Cousin,

THO' I be almost amidst death's pangs, I cannot forget you, because of the sweet friendship we have had together; and because you are (I am persuaded) one of the heirs of glory, and among those who wrestle through manifold temptations, unto the land of eternal consolations. O that

that I could tell you what my Lord hath done for me unto this very hour; and much more since I came hither, than in many foregoing years. I think if I had time, I could fill a whole volume with wonderful experiences of his loving-kindness, strange providences, and sweet chastisements; so that an halfyear may be better than an hundred. It is not the length of time we are to look to; we have a race to run to heaven, and when we have finished it, we have done. Oh Cousin, even a faint may live long, and make very small progress to glory; yea, many go backward; and it were better for them, if they died ere that be, before they dishonoured God by their backsliding carriage; therefore run fast, 'Look to the joy that is set before you,' and patiently endure all the temptations and troubles in time, for your Lord hath promised, that 'he will never leave you, nor forsake you; ' and none shall be able to pluck you out of his 'hand.' Indeed you may have sore trials, both outward and inward; but 'be of good courage, ' and he shall strengthen your heart; for you are not to bear your own burden, but to cast it fully over upon him. And I promise you, in my Lord's name, that you shall be sustained: he is our strength, our wisdom, our righteousness, and our all; even all that we want, all that we can desire. Never regard a long or a short life; but live to die, and then you die to live eternally: O think much upon eternity, and you shall think nothing of time. Alas, alas! the things of time fill our eyes so, that we never regard eternity; yet time will be at a close ere ever we be aware. I have somewhat the advantage of you, in getting the fore-start: but we shall be together perpetually just now, and we shall have another manner

of converse, than possibly we could have had on earth. In heaven they are not confined, to moments, days, and years; we shall have eternity to rejoice and to be glad in. O what a life shall we have, when you and I shall 'follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes!' when we shall have sin, temptations, and miseries done away! We know not the excellency of our invaluable inheritance; and therefore we are so much taken up with earthly trifles, and shadows, which are nothing; which bewitch all the worldlings out of their wits, and the saints too, in a great measure; it were more wisdom in us, to use the world as not abusing it, as not setting our hearts upon it. Beware of the cares of the world, and of the deceitfulness of riches, wherewith you may be entangled, in your present condition; if you take not heed, your course to glory will be the more slow; and you will drive your chariot-wheels heavily up to the higher city; yea, the thick clay will make them come back upon you. O consider how great a business salvation is! we can never consider it enough. You will think so, when you come to death, which you ought to look upon as at the door.

I speak not these things, as if you knew them not already; but I put you in remembrance, desiring to communicate a little of my mind to you, now when I am at the brink of time; because Providence hath so ordered it, that I cannot speak face to face these things, which are the true and genuine thoughts of my heart. Beware of the pollutions of the times; it is comfortable to me that I had little or nothing to do, as to outward things, with this horrid, cursed defection. Hate the garments spotted with the flesh: clean garments

ments are of great worth; and these few, in this woful time, that have kept their garments clean, ' shall walk with our Lord in white; for they are worthy.' To keep clean garments, that is, to be pious alone; pious in your family, in your worship; pious in your worldly employments, full of charity, despising the world; walking wisely towards these that are without, and towards these that are within. And as to the times, let your zeal be wise, and your wisdom zealous. You may believe a dying man, I am fully persuaded that this Prelacy is abominable Antichristianism; that the prelates and curates are the ministers, not of Christ, but of Antichrist and Satan; and that it is utterly unlawful to hear them, or do any thing which may shew that you esteem them ministers, or in any way strengthen their hands. O the dreadful wrath which is hanging over these lands like a cloud, and which will fall down in a deluge of divine vengeance. God will make this land to swim in blood; even the blood of all sorts, great and small, rich and poor, old and young, shall be poured out, like water; he will be a strange man, that shall happily escape such a consumption. I will not speak much of the matter, but I see fearful things coming. But, O the glorious days succeeding these! I cannot apprehend the glory that shall shine in Britain, which shall lighten to the ends of the earth. I fear not death; it is sin only that we ought to fear; the sting of death is sin; that being taken away, it is most harmless. It is sweet to die in Christ! O what an exchange do I make! I shall see him, and that glorious company of saints and angels, 'following him whithersoever he goes:' the first hour of glory shall, in a manner, make me forget that ever I was upon earth.

My afflictions have been greater than the spectators could imagine; and still will be greater, and greater, until I arrive at the haven of eternal rest. O it is sweet! O it is sweet! after a great toil and labour. My Lord is taking me in the fittest time; for both body and soul are very weary and sore tossed; but this body shall get a sound sleep, and a ravishing wakening. O the great difference betwixt what it is now, and what it shall be shortly! who can conceive what Christ hath done for the saints? O the depth of free, altogether free love and grace! it shall take up eternity, to extol the inconceivable love of JEHOVAH and the Lamb. O to think that bits of clay, sinful clay, like you and me, should be conformed unto the image of our only Lord Jesus! that is a wonderful exaltation! wonderful in the eyes of all these that see their own emptiness and vileness. O admire! O praise! O adore! let these things be still imprinted on your heart; all other things are but trifles. Look upon the world, as a number of mad bodies: they are beasts, whose conceptions are confined within an inch of time; they are poor spirits, who gape after earth's riches, honours, and pleasures. If the world knew what they were doing, they would wonder at themselves; at least, they would begin to question, whether their life on earth was real, or only empty, and a night-dream. O such a sight as I have gotten of the world! O it is but vain, vanity of vanities: the flower and choice of it is cursed, and altogether vanity. O if I could tell you of the nothingness of the world, and of things temporal; and of the massiness of things eternal! compare them together, and you will wonder at the difference! The most part of professors (among whom

whom I put myself) take an easy way to heaven; and O where will you find the man or woman, that studies a close walk with God? It is recorded of Enoch, that he walked with God three hundred years: but who can say, he hath walked with God one day? We lose God in the midst of our worldly employments, and cannot say, 'We have set 'the Lord always before us;' therefore we cannot say, We shall not be moved. We approach to him, in the morning, evening, and at other times; but we neglect our thoughts: whereas to live full of holy, divine thoughts, is to live a saint: as the man is, so are his thoughts. Alas! I may say it by sad experience, thoughts unwatched over have made me, many a time, not to differ much from a worldling. Keep your thoughts right, and all shall be right; 'Keep thine heart with all diligence, (saith the Spirit of God,) for out of it are the issues of life.' If your thoughts be right, your prayers will be seasonable, your words and actions will be seasonable; 'for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh,' and the hand acteth. Commit all your affairs, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, wholly to your heavenly Father, without the least reservation: 'he cares for you; therefore be careful for nothing, but in every thing give thanks.' Run, run with patience the race that is set before you: laying aside every weight, that may bear you down: entangle not yourself with the world, have as little to do with it as you can: 'The righteous shall scarcely be saved; they who go most uprightly, shall find hard enough work; we are so full of corruptions original and actual, that holiness is quite contrary to our corrupt natures; I mean not the common holiness, which even those that

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are strict are thought to have; but that which our Lord commands; 'He that loveth father or mother, sister or brother, or the world or himself, better than me, is not worthy of me.' O it is an unknown thing, to 'deny all, to take up their cross daily, and follow Christ.' I had a great desire to preach Christ; but he will accept the will for the deed: I go to better exercise, whereof one hour is better than all the preachings betwixt this and Christ's second coming, compensated into one. All here are but shadows; all above is substance. O what elevated divines are above! they are all filled with all the fulness of God; and do preach and extol the transcendent excellencies of JEHOVAH and the Lamb: there is a perpetual extolling of Christ. In Canticles, he can never enough speak of his spouse; above, his spouse can never enough speak of him. There all are ravished with the Antient of days! Who, but the Antient of days? who, but Christ? who, but the saints? Then, let never earth and heaven be compared together; for I tell you, earth is but a tormenting hell, in comparison of that unspeakable delightful, and altogether ravishing land, unto which unworthy, but happy I am going. O methinks I am touching the skirts of the fragrant breathings of the mountains of spices! and O how must I be ravished, when I shall draw in no other air, but the breathings of the higher paradise? They have the advantage, that get the fore-start to heaven, and see the face of JEHOVAH first; as being more antient possessors of that excellent inheritance. Why should any be afraid to go to heaven too soon? Why should any be afraid he be too soon happy? Let worldlings desire to crawl long upon their dunghills: but let

us ever be longing 'to be dissolved, and to be with our Lord, which is best of all.' I commit you, your mother-in-law, your wife and children, to the protection of the Almighty, and pray for temporal, and eternal blessings to be poured out upon you. These are the words of,

Your dying cousin,
A. Welwood.

V. A Letter to Mr DAVIDSON.

Right Reverend,

THO' I be stepping into eternity, and was thought to have been just entering into it about half an hour ago, I could not but remember you, and dictate a little of my mind unto you: not that I intended to write any instructions unto you, but only to shew, that God is good to them who seek him; and that in his providence, his promises are all accomplished, to the full, to me. I cannot tell what he hath done for my soul; but I think he hath brought me to the end of my days, to the end of my race, by such a wonderful chain of divine providence, that I would not for ten thousand worlds that he had brought me any other way; or, that my race had been either longer, or shorter. He liveth long enough, who liveth till he obtain heaven: all other things are but pendicles. He liveth a short while who is unprepared for it, of whatsoever age he be: therefore my death needs not offend any man; for, what can I get more than the 'kingdom immovable, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?' I desired to live for no other end, but to preach my Lord to the great congregation; and think you not

not that he will accept the will for the deed? I dedicated my life to his service; and I hope he will graciously take it off my hand, as if I had done him many years service. And I must tell you, he hath many wonderful ways of bringing his children unto glory: I could tell you of it by sweet experience, if my weakness and breath would permit. I would not, for all the glory, riches, and pleasures of a vain world, that my lot had been another than my Lord hath appointed it; yea, my last half-year's providence hath been a golden chain, which neither I, men, nor angels can sufficiently value. Would you know what I think now of heaven? Tho' I were out of this state of mortality, I could never think enough of it. O! O! O! the joy of being with JEHOVAH and the Lamb! O! the 'excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus,' even on this side of time! but to see him as he is, O who can tell what a sight it is? Even these who see him face to face, see as it were the skirts of his beauty and excellency: and let them pry still deeper and deeper, till eternity, as it were, be at an end, they shall still be but beginning; and yet never well begun. To shew the great love and respect I have ever had for you, both formerly and now, I write unto you, even when the dead-rittle is in my throat: and tho' I be in a great agony, I find the way to heaven, even that new and living way, is only by the blood of the Son of God: there is no other way; but, to Believe in Christ, and be saved. But it is a lively, purifying, loving, and believing way. I cannot say much, I am in death's pangs. But, 'O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?' I am likely to have a sharp combat; but, I hope, Christ will not be an indifferent

ferent spectator. The end crowns the work. And if once I were within Emmanuel's surpassing sweet land of conquest, then I should trample death and hell under foot, and triumph over all the miseries and afflictions of time, which seemed to triumph over me. O death, what art thou in mine eyes! my Lord hath swallowed thee up in victory: and can a free-born son, and conqueror, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, be afraid of a conquered slave? Rev. xiv. 13. Hell, sin, devil, and death, are conquered slaves. I rest,

Dear Sir,

Yours,

A. Welwood.

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